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# The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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## Critics Wanted

THE advertisement which appears on another page in this *Review*, announcing a request for critical essays from writers of thirty years of age or under, is no mere prize offer for just another comment. The editors hope that the essay chosen will be provocative, they hope that it will not be smart, they are prepared equally to find it devastating, ironic, and inconoclastic, or classical, conservative, and bitter against anarchy, vulgarity, or wild experiment. The young English and the young French (it is credibly reported abroad) are turning puritan—with a difference. It is not probable that Thirty and Under will wish the American mind to be what Forty and Over complacently expects them to think.

A really critical essay on American letters by a man or woman in the twenties may have a value as evidence out of proportion to the experience it draws upon and the thinking that goes into it. We make fewer snap judgments as we grow older because the literary scene begins to have perspective. Appreciation, if less enthusiastic, is better grounded. Life, for those who have lived as well as aged, begins to supply invaluable criterions for testing the true and the false, and stored-up experience makes comprehension more than guesswork. Insensibly the violent certainties and hard skepticisms of youth begin to alter into something richer and more flexible, more intuitive, more emotionally just, which gives criticism the values of good painting and music thoroughly matured.

But the finest criticism can only interpret—it cannot create—moods and impulses which are not native to the author. We still must go to the young Goethe, not to his commentators, for his humanism. It is the Preface to the Lyrical Ballads, and not the writers on the Romantic Movement, which contains the evidence of what post-revolutionary England wanted to be.

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Nor is thirty and under too soon to formulate a program and analyze the tendencies of a generation. Self-consciousness and self-analysis, not carried to an inhibition of creative energy, are good exercises in a country like this one, where the price is all upon getting something done, and *ultimate* aims and ends are seldom spoken of except on the side lines. Many observers think that the young American writer is determined to become either a discontented intellectual, or a hard-boiled journalist. But being an intellectual, and especially a discontented one, is certainly not an end or aim of literature, and it is difficult to see the merit, though not hard to understand the apparent necessity, of being hard-boiled in journalism. Indeed these ideals—regarded as programs—are so exactly equivalent to getting rich as the sole end of a business life, or making the front page as a terminal of success, that one wonders why those that profess them go in for so hazardous a profession as authorship at all. How to live while writing is as vital a theme as it ever was, but that is an economic, not a literary, question. We are (naturally) interested in the survival values of an artistic life, but not with the kind of interest which follows the changing nature of the American mind. We want to know what the younger writers propose to do with their imaginations in the country that bred and, more or less, supports them, suspecting that if they have real ideas as to how to shape literature to life as they see it, and craft to fit life into literature, they will never starve collectively, however often pioneers must pay the costs of originality.

There are a dozen magazines that tell how to market manuscripts, and twenty books on how to make poems and stories and plays that will sell. They function as well as could be expected, although no one of them has yet discovered the formula that works tomorrow as well as it worked yesterday, and with the empty brain as well as with the full one. But to think exclusively about selling literature is like building up an automobile sales force with no rapidly developing product constantly and intelligently altered to fit the times. Surely someone is

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## *"I Knew a Man Once"*

By AMANDA BENJAMIN HALL

I KNEW a man once who defamed
All great ones that the earth has claimed,

And Time appraised, who snatched degrees
From Plato and from Socrates,
And flawed their fair philosophies.

Who branded Shakespeare "but a man"
And minimized the Corsican,

With plea that history consent
To his eternal banishment,
Denied the lily and the bee!

It was a thorny irony
He wove for Christ. Among the spears,
Tearless, he marched the road of tears
To Calvary. . . .

And threatened Cæsar's power anew,
And like a last conspirator,
Unkind as Brutus was, he slew
The mighty Roman emperor.

. . . So he impugned by means unjust
The men of glory and of dust!

Yet not one answered back. The dead
Are always silent and well-bred.

*This Week*

"By Way of Art," and "The Right Thing to Do."
Reviewed by ARTHUR COLTON.
"Alice Meynell."
Reviewed by THEODORE MAYNARD.
"The Great Mary Celeste Hoax."
Reviewed by CAPTAIN DAVID W. BONE.
"Pick up the Pieces."
Reviewed by ADOLF MEYER, M. D.
"Cora Potts."
Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS.
Round about Parnassus.
By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.
"Whiteoaks of Jalna."
Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS.
John Mistletoe. III.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

*Next Week, or Later*

Authentic Tidings.
By JOHN LIVINGSTON LOWES.

## Custom and Regulation*

By ARTHUR COLTON

THERE are four classes of critics of the American scene: Americans, Europeans, European Americans, and Americanized Europeans. The first class is ourselves grown critical or still complacent. We are going through a sort of moral and spiritual stocktaking; the amount of our output is enormous, the variation in value indefinitely large, but I think it safe to say that, with exceptions admitted, nearly all books of importance on America have been written, and are being written, by Americans. The books of the second class of critics have usually no value. The positiveness of that statement, however, is partly the emphasis of irritation; there are so many of them, they are often written by men of standing and ability tempted by the huge American market which will absorb anything, to write of what they know very little for the instruction of readers who at least know more than they. Their books sell partly on the strength of their subject-matter, partly on the reputations back of them, but these reputations must be somewhat lowered in the opinion of Americans whose opinion is worth anything. The third class of books may have value—I have read one or two that had within the past year—but it is apt to suffer from a disease of superiority that is peculiarly unfortunate when complicated by the accidents of misinformation. The fourth is something of peculiar interest at this time; it consists of the recollections of young emigrants now grown older and looking back, or the reactions of men of American birth but not of the elder strain and tradition. The Americanized European seems to me a more significant commentator than the Europeanized American, and if that impression is correct, the fact is of some importance because there has been and will be an increasing volume of both kinds.

Types of the Americanized European will readily occur to mind. I name at random, for instance, Professor Pupin and Mary Antin. The volume that happens to be at hand to represent the type is only incidentally a comment on the American scene. Mr. Rosenfeld's name is familiar as a musical critic, and with regard to his other subjects one may admire the range of his sensitive culture without admiring all that he admires. He is a modernist but with distinctions. His enthusiasms are well under control. He writes of music with perhaps better knowledge and significance than of the other arts, but one of his best essays is on the corn dance of the New Mexican Indians, and it is in this essay that he introduces certain reactions to the "American scene" which classify him with this peculiar kind of critic, intimate and yet still, in a sense, outside.

The volume at hand representing the Europeanized American, however, is largely such a comment and more than usually unfortunate. Social control by manners and customs instead of by law, is the meaning of Mr. Nock's title "The Right Thing to Do." He thinks American lawlessness is due to too much law, that imperative regulation kills the natural growth of controlling manners and customs, and that the English are more governed by custom because they have fewer laws. This is putting the cart before the horse. Community of custom implies "likemindedness," which comes from ages of common history. Professor Giddings remarks somewhere that liberty, equality, and fraternity are good possibilities, but not in that order. Liberty comes

*BY WAY OF ART. By PAUL ROSENFELD. New York: Coward-McCann. 1928. $2.50.
THE RIGHT THING TO DO AND OTHER DEBATABLE MATTERS. By ALBERT JAY NOCK. New York: Harper & Bros. 1928.

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last. If there is in America a powerful movement of standardization going on, and if at the same time we are being more and more regulated by law, there is probably a reason, cause, or condition, behind these phenomena. The condition seems evident enough. The liberty of the frontier is inapplicable to great cities. Floods of immigration have made us less likeminded than we used to be. A heterogeneous population in dense communities is necessarily uncomfortable if disorderly, and disorderly until regulated. The more homogeneous and likeminded it becomes, the more can its common habits take the place of laws. It may be that this standardizing and regulating is the expression of a folk instinct. That, at least, is plausible; and Mr. Nock's order of cause and effect is not plausible.

His intention is to apply intelligence, or *Intelligenz*, to the criticism of society, especially the American scene, and he is quite open in the opinion that he does so. *Intelligenz* he thinks better for the purpose than intelligence, because it more distinctly means the power of seeing things as they are, seeing them objectively, applying "one's consciousness to them simply and directly, letting it take its own way over them, uncharted by prepossession, unchanneled by prejudice, and above all uncontrolled by routine and formula." The idea is much the same as Arnold's "letting the intelligence play around" a subject.

The essay, published in 1924, introduced a selection from Artemus Ward's works. At any rate it is a constructive bit of criticism, the question is why Ward has not faded out of memory like Burdett, Nye, Naseby, and other journalistic or lecturing humorists of that era. The answer given is that he was perhaps, the most "intelligent" critic in America of men and affairs in the hot and jumbled years before the Civil War; the least encumbered with personality, or channeled by prejudice, or controlled by formula. The answer is probably correct. Lincoln had a similar sane humanity, and probably liked Ward for his wisdom as well as for his humor.

Unfortunately Mr. Nock's attitude toward America is, like that of many Europeanized Americans, an Arnoldian attitude. He formally renounces and disclaims all prejudice, and if one is "superior" it cannot be helped.

It is unfortunate if it cannot be helped. It does not seem in itself so predestinate. Not all men of large culture are "superior." It is rather a question of a manner, which often misrepresents the man. Arnold seems to have been more like his poetry than like his prose in respect to this "manner," and where the "manner" appears in the Europeanized American, it may illustrate the dangers that threaten those who transplant themselves.

Mr. Nock does not seem at all a good example of a free intelligence, seeing things as they really are, unchanneled by prejudice, looking down on the messy American scene in the calm light of reason and culture. He seems to be as prejudiced as the rest of us, rather petulant and dogmatic, not always well informed.

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To illustrate: American conversation, it appears, is inferior to that of Europe, and "the more one thinks of it, the more one finds in Goethe's remark that the test of civilization is conversation." That is a theory more or less explicitly maintained in Mr. Clive Bell's "Civilization." Mr. Bell is distinctly a one-sided man, but Goethe was not. It would be difficult to select anyone so typical of *Intelligenz* or more devoid of the "superior" manner. I do not know where the "remark" is to be found, probably in the Eckermann Conversations, but one thing I would be inferentially sure: that it was not an isolated idea in his mind. Goethean ideas are rounded ideas, and this one is not a truth but a suggestion. It belongs in a group of ideas. Conversation can be the test of only one aspect of civilization. It would be also suggestive to say that there is no test of civilization. Civilization is not an extract or essence. It is a vast complex. There is no single test because it is not any one kind of thing, but a combination of innumerable traditions, devices, ways of living, thinking, and feeling. Goethe would always be aware of its multiformity, however he might make an extract for the purpose of an epigram.

Or again: Mr. Nock is irritated by the assumption —he calls it the "convention"—that a republic implies a democracy:

> the convention whereby we assume that republicanism, which is a political system under which everybody has a vote, is the same as democracy, which is primarily an economic status, and secondarily political. Those who speak of the United States as a democracy, for instance, are misusing language most ludicrously, for it is no such thing, never was, and never was intended to be. The Fathers of the Republic were well aware of the difference between a republic and a democracy, and it is no credit to the intelligence of their descendants that the two are now almost invariably confused.

A superior person should be bland and not too obviously mistaken. The words were used loosely by some, and precisely by others, one hundred and fifty years ago, just as they are to-day. We know very well what the Fathers of the Republic thought. They were better informed than is Mr. Nock. They knew that a republic is not "a political system under which everybody has a vote." They knew that the old republics were oligarchies, more or less. If "primarily" means etymologically and historically, both words are primarily political, and were applied to more or less similar political situations. A republic is a commonwealth, and the word refers to the object of government, namely, the common weal. Its rulers are elected on the presumption that elected and responsible rulers are apt to attend to the common weal better than hereditary ones. The theory may be debatable. We happen to believe it substantially sound. In time of peril the Roman republic used to elect a dictator. The American republic tends to make its President something of a dictator at such times. A republic is not less, but more, a republic for a usage of that kind.

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Democracy is a word which would seem to mean "a political system under which everyone has a vote," but its chief prototype, the Athenian democracy, gave the vote to about one person in twenty. It was a political word then, but it is not purely political now. Its accumulated social and economic connotations are perhaps more often in mind than its political ones. The two words are not synonyms, and I know of no "convention" that they are, nor find them "almost invariably confused," nor more so in America to-day than elsewhere and of old. Any country with approximately universal suffrage may be called a political democracy reasonably enough, but no large nation governs itself wholly or directly. In the social and economic sense it is not a very definite idea, unless it means communism. Something approaching it, and yet not at all communistic, may exist in very small or primitive societies, but in any large and complex group there is always inequality unless it is artificially prevented. These things are all commonplaces, and most good modern text books of politics or sociology contain them all substantially.

Or again: Mr. Nock remarks that America has yet to learn from Europe how to exercise a merely pleasant talent in true taste and for no motive but the love of it, to attain "the view of the arts, so general in Europe, so uncommon in America, as something for anyone to take a hand in, naturally and easily, as familiar domestic assets for making life agreeable, with no thought of using them on the chance of money or fame." He illustrates with a London solicitor who plays Bach every evening, and a Belgian engineer who admirably accompanies and sings Flemish folk songs. It would probably be nearer the facts to say that such things are not "general" anywhere, nor "uncommon" in any civilized country. I know, or knew, in New York a publisher who played the cello every evening, a college professor who is an accomplished pianist, a real estate man who is also a composer, several business men who more or less secretly practice landscape painting, a physician who collects prints, and a broker who wrote a standard book on old silverware; also an oculist whose hobby is modern poetry and a chemist who writes it, a dentist who reads theosophy and a lawyer who used to spend his late afternoons over Plato in the Greek. I knew a citrus ranchman in California who was always quoting Emerson, a wholesale druggist in Ohio who gave his Sundays to botanizing, and a farmer in Connecticut whose favorite reading was economics and his favorite author John Stuart Mill. But what does all this amount to? It is a common impression, or assumption, that one meets more readily with illustrations of private culture in Europe than in America. Whether, or to what extent, it is really so, nobody knows. Certainly I do not, and Mr. Nock fails to persuade me that he knows anything about it either. The best reason that I know of for thinking it probably true is that, given the conditions and circumstances, it rather naturally would be.

Indeed, the chief interest I find in Mr. Nock's essays is a line of thought derivable from his title, but which he has not derived. Custom is a more comfortable guidance than statutes, or courts, or blue coated policemen. It is pleasanter to be orderly by habit than by compulsion. Blessed are those who conform automatically,

> Glad hearts without reproach or blot,
> Who do Thy work and know it not.

An agreeable society requires a large basis of accepted convention, at least in respect to outward behavior. Leopardi thought that the test of a civilization was how much individualism it would stand without going to pieces, perhaps as good a test, or perhaps not, as the Goethean test of conversation. But Professor Giddings's arrangement of liberty last and fraternity, or family likeness, preceding it, has its bearings on Leopardi. One's first idea is always that variations from types are more interesting than the type, but the matter is not so simple. Without the type the variations would have no interest. The output in the arts seems to be most rich in closely knit societies, of strong traditions and a large field of common understanding. Individuals seem to stand out more definitely against a homogeneous background.

Walter Bagehot somewhere remarks on the process which primitive societies had to go through in order to achieve what he calls the "legal mind." The process is undoubtedly painful. The rules in such societies are extraordinarily rigid and elaborate. If America is notable now among the great nations both for lawlessness and lawmaking, it is not likely that the causes are on the surface. The fundamental phenomenon is of miscellaneous races poured into an empty continent, formerly less miscellaneous and rather slowly, of late more miscellaneous and very rapidly. They are not only heterogeneous but uprooted. They not only bring different traditions, but they lose them. Jostled and intermingled, in shifting fortune and personal enterprise, in sudden cities and withdrawing frontiers, they find their footing but slowly. You can make general laws, but you cannot make manners and customs. They grow in due time after the common footing is found. The laws you make are something in the nature of a search for that common footing. Habit must tend in some degree to supersede law, since a law that induced no habit could not be enforced, and a law which came to be identical with custom would not be called upon. In the face of a phenomenon so large, and social movements in respect to it which are probably at bottom more instinctive than conscious, the advice of superiority seems out of proportion. It is like advising a trade wind, or condescending to the equator, or reprimanding the precession of the equinoxes. It is somewhere in this connection that the testimony of the Americanized European seems to have more point than the remarks of the Europeanized American.

## Critics Wanted

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thinking hard upon what literature must become in the United States if it is to be more than a copy of a copy of domestic manners, or a forcing of native rhythms of thought into a foreign pattern.

Where do we go from here is the question—and the answer is surely not final that says, into *The Cosmopolitan* and *The Saturday Evening Post*.

There are always a thousand good craftsmen for one creative artist, in literature as elsewhere. The good critic will search out the real artist, and if he is qualified by age and nature of experience to penetrate a creative imagination, or if he is a creative artist himself, he will have something to tell the world that does not depend upon maturity or seasoned judgment for solid excellence.

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"Not even Mr. Arnold Bennett or Mr. St. John Ervine, for all their pugnacity, have been faced with the prospect of fighting three duels with their victims in one day," says *John O'London's Weekly*. "This was the problem which M. Henri Beraud, the French critic, had to face the other day. Fortunately, however, friends intervened and so the actual shedding of blood was averted. M. Beraud, who has been described as 'the seventeen-stone knight-errant of modern criticism,' and by Mr. Sisley Huddleston as having 'the spirit of Don Quixote in the body of Sancho Panza,' recently finished what promises to be an aggressive and provocative book of studies of living statesmen, including Mussolini, Mr. Baldwin, and Sir Austen Chamberlain."

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# Distinction and Distraction

ALICE MEYNELL. A Memoir by VIOLA MEYNELL. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1929. $5.

Reviewed by THEODORE MAYNARD

THIS is the authorized biography of Alice Meynell. It was to have been written by her son Everard, who had already done a first-rate piece of work with his "Life of Francis Thompson." But his death shortly after that of his mother obliged his sister to take up the task. She has done it well, with a wealth of detail which will be invaluable to any student of Alice Meynell's prose and verse, but without displaying much natural aptitude for criticism. And while the picture she paints of her mother is vivid and delicately accurate, there are some matters about which I should like to know a little more. A discrete reserve, of course, is at present desirable, and nobody could know better than one of the family just what to put in and what to leave out. But it is to be hoped that in the next generation an intelligence notably acute, courageous, and tactful will retell the story of this exceedingly interesting career.

I like to believe that by then the position of Alice Meynell in literature will be more secure than it is today. Yet I cannot help feeling about her much as she felt about Coventry Patmore—that to prophesy that the critics of a hundred years hence will confess his odes high classic poetry assuredly "is it promise the critics of a hundred years hence high classic quality in their judgment." There is now something of a reaction against what was once a generally received critical opinion—led by Ruskin, Meredith, and Patmore—which placed her prose style as the furthest point achieved in English. Max Beerbohm was no doubt right in complaining that this style though "quite perfect in its sort," was coming to be considered "the one and only way in which fine English could possibly be written." To regard, as some do, however, that fineness as too studied and artificial, is to be decidedly unjust. In the hands of any one less sincere or less original than Mrs. Meynell it might have degenerated into preciosity; but with her the manner is merely the carefully chosen method of setting down with the utmost precision the recondite and concise thought.

Her little daughter, Monica, put the case against her in a letter which ran:

Dear Mother,—I hope you will in time give up your absurd thoughts about litreture. It makes my mind quite feverish when I think of the exhaltation your undergoing. I'm getting quite frightened about calling you "dear Mother" because you will begin to take it quite seriously. Just because Mr. Henley and those sort of unsencere men say you write well simply because they know if they don't flatter you they'll never get anything for their paper. Now mother take my advise and don't be quite so estatic, you'll get on just as well in the world and much better because you'll be respected. Now just see. MONNIE.

But we also recognize the hand of Monica in the paper that the children wrote under the library-table in imitation of the magazine being edited by their elders working above. "Her thought is a thought which very few writers got. It is mystical, but excucite. She is a little obscure to readers who are not up in literature sufficiently to understand mystical touches." She is indeed. And in slightly different language Mr. J. L. Garvin says much the same thing: "Each verse or essay contains part of the essence distilled from a deliberate and vigilant life; you cannot apprehend a year of hers by a moment of your own."

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Never was there a writer whose work was more completely in accord with her character. She approached it in a spirit so strict that it would have often been pedantry, had not ever-present humor held her safe. Slovenliness, "the fashion of an animated strut of style" (for which she held the influence of Gibbon responsible) sentimentality, cheap thinking, "the ungenerous art of the inferior," "the facile literary opportunity"—all these she fastidiously preserved herself from. And further distinction was bestowed by her acceptance of the Catholic Faith. As an old woman she wrote to her daughter Olivia, "I saw, when I was very young, that a guide in morals was even more necessary than a guide in faith. It was for this I joined the Church." Everything in life and literature was a matter therefore of discipline, which is the fount of distinction.

Had it not been for her austere integrity she must have found this hardly possible to practice. She bore eight children; and, except during the leisure of her last years, did a crushing amount of journalistic work. Her husband was the editor of two magazines, one a weekly and the other a monthly; and the greater part of both were written by the Meynells under various pseudonyms. The large family necessitated a large income, which in turn necessitated an unremitting grind. Everything was grist that came to their literary mill—art criticism, book reviewing, society notes, even paragraphs in what in those days corresponded to a "column." The *Pall Mall Gazette* commissioned a series of weekly articles, and Alice writes to her husband, "I shall not growl at £1, 10s.; but £2 would make me very happy;" and in the winter of 1901-2 she went to America to try and scrape together a little badly needed money for the family budget. All that happened to her was accepted with serene courage, and, while convalescing after the birth of one of her children—Miss Meynell does not mention this fact—she kept her engagement with the *Pall Mall*, by writing her article in bed. But not

Carl Sandburg as the Wings of Parnassus. A caricature by Jacobi. One of the poets who will eventually appear is "Round about Parnassus."
See page 153.

a line that she ever produced was slip-shod. Anonymity was refused as a refuge or an excuse. She was never so harassed as to be hurried.

In later years a legacy from her father (one of Charles Dickens's great friends), the increasing sales of her books, and the fruits of her husband's journalistic energy made the circumstances of the household easier. Mrs. Meynell was able to travel, to revisit the Italy whose remembered skies shine over all her work, the Italy of her romantic childhood. In London she conducted, first at 47 Palace Court and afterwards in the flat over Burns and Oates's shop, the nearest approach to a salon that London has recently known. I prefer to recall her after the callers had gone on Sunday evenings, sitting in the long room panelled with its beautiful gold-thread Japanese tapestries, under Sargent's drawing of her, aged, but black-haired and erect, " a saint and a sibyl," as J. C. Squire has described her, "smoking a cigarette." The kindest, wisest and most richly endowed of great ladies.

The men whose minds had meant most to her were all dead, Patmore in 1896, Thompson in 1907, Meredith in 1909. Of Meredith she said in a letter to her mother, "He told me that I could have made him what he should have been, and what he could not be without me. He calculated whether there had been a time when he was a widower and I unmarried when we might have met. A retrospective offer." Thompson she and her husband had made—a second claim upon fame, minor but strong. There was nobody quite the same afterwards. Nobody but Chesterton. ("He is mine much more, really, then Belloc's.") She recognized him as at once the wittiest and most serious of the writers of our time; and said that had she been born a man, and large, she would have been Chesterton. But she had only rare personal contact with him.

Perhaps because of the loneliness of her last years she summoned and matured her powers undistracted. As age increased, her flame seemed to burn brighter. She set her house in order; got ready her collected poems and revised her earlier prose, bringing it out under the title of "Essays"—surely the best thing of its kind in the language, and published "Hearts of Controversy," where she sustains her note longer than in "Essays," as well as a slighter, but equally brilliant book, "The Second Person Singular." Thereafter all her failing strength was turned into the writing of two last pamphlets of verse. In them was the one she considered her masterpiece, the poem on Shakespeare. The shadow of death was drawing near, but her most characteristic thought was that of the alchemy of time. All her singing was of youth, except that which struck the note of farewell, " 'Vale?' 'Addio?' 'Leb'wohl?' Not one but seems a tranquil refutation." The last word and the gravest in this final creative period is

> My human song must be
> My human thought. Be patient till 'tis done.
> I shall not hold my little peace; for me
> There is no peace but one.

# A Forecastle Classic

THE GREAT MARY CELESTE HOAX. By LAURENCE J. KEATING. Boston: The Houghton Mifflin Company. 1929. $4.

Reviewed by CAPTAIN DAVID W. BONE

DESCRIBED upon the dust-cover as the solution of "the most famous of maritime mysteries," this sizeable volume deals with the strange case of the brig, *Mary Celeste*. Put briefly, her story—in essential fact—is as follows. She sailed from New York, fully manned, on the 7th of November, 1872, bound for Genoa. Reported to have been found on the high seas without a soul on board, she was brought in to Gibraltar by part of the crew of the barquentine *Dei Gratia* in December of the same year. No news of the missing crew having been heard, she was adjudged a derelict by an Admiralty court at Gibraltar, and salvage of £1,700 was awarded to the *Dei Gratia* and her crew for their services in bringing her into port.

She established a legend at sea, a famous "dog-watch" topic that almost eclipsed the story of the Flying Dutchman. Whatever the real facts of her abandonment may have been, the forecastle parliaments let no detail of fanciful embellishment go unrecorded in statement of her *cause*.

When found, she had all sail set and was headed for her port, steered by a ghostly hand! Her salvors—from the *Dei Gratia*—had no hand in trimming sail as she came through the Straits: dead hands threw the braces from the pins, let go and hauled, set sail and furled; the anchor went down by supernatural agency as she rounded-to under shelter of the Rock!

I can, myself, recall moments of wondering amaze as some old watch-mate told the common tale. Sailor fashion, he would multiply the almost incredible details of her state when the seamen of the *Dei Gratia* boarded her at sea.

All sail was set and she was bowling along in style—the wheel unheld! The cabin table was set for three: a hurried rising was indicated by the tilt of cup and saucer! The galley stove was still hot and pots and pans a-top of it held victuals, over-cooked and yet warm to the touch! A cat sidled up and purred a greeting to the astonished boarders: she was the only living creature on the ship!

And now, comes Mr. Keating to put us all right, and this he does in a manner that makes us all feel as simpletons. It appears that the *Mary Celeste* (we had her named the *Marie Celeste* in our construction of the tale) was not abandoned: four of her men were aboard when the *Dei Gratia* boarded her in Lat. 37° N. and Long. 18° W., and these mariners were indeed searching the seas for the very ship that hove in sight! Mr. Keating bases his story upon that of an alleged survivor, one Pemberton, who avers that he was cook of the ill-fated brig when she sailed from New York. The ramifications of this astonishing "yarn" are much too lengthy to be quoted here, and indeed it would be unfair to rob Mr. Keating of his thunder. His tale is ingenious and quite credible, and he has apparently been at considerable pains to search for and examine all the evidence pertinent to the making of his book.

But I should imagine him to be a somewhat hasty and argumentative man—from his writing. He does not show the calm, judicial spirit in presentation and examination of his evidence that one would look for in a book of this kind. A Board of Trade inquiry into a late disaster at sea (the loss of the *Vestris*) was a model that he might wisely have followed: patience and unruffled serenity are much more impressive than a style that is passionate with-

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out being dramatic. In the earlier pages of this book, Mr. Keating goes far out of his way to belittle the efforts of the Queen's Proctor in Admiralty at Gibraltar, Mr. Solly-Flood, to elucidate the mystery of the abandoned vessel. I admit the temptation to poke fun at such a Dickensian surname, but it seems strange to me that this author should appear —by the tone of his writing—to pour contempt upon the official's efforts, and then proceed—in one hundred and ninety-five printed pages—to prove that some such strange and violent drama as Mr. Solly-Flood surmised was what actually took place aboard the *Mary Celeste*.

## A Two-Year Debauch

PICK UP THE PIECES. By "NORTH 3-1." New York: Doubelday, Doran & Co. 1929. $3.

Reviewed by ADOLF MEYER, M.D.
Johns Hopkins Hospital

TO my regret I find myself with a reaction of disappointment in spite of the best intention to learn as much as possible from the presumably well-intended work of a victim of our relatively imperfect provisions for the handling of drinkers. I read the book from cover to cover (unfortunately beginning with the cover and forced to return to the cover). I found relatively little about what made and kept the drinker a drinker and about what he had done to himself and to others and what with the help of others he might have done for himself, and where others might become more helpful in such cases. The story is one of aloofness from collaboration. The cover displays the anonymous author as a willing adviser to others and one looks in the book for the ways he might be able to help.

The whole "two year debauch" is treated as an adventure of getting in and out and through institutions, with a justified appeal for sympathy, but without any adequate suggestion as to how one might pass from a system of "adventure" to a less hazardous and more effective and promising procedure. The author, a publicity man who failed to find and use ways of relief from his alcoholism, treats his illegal and legal detention as a problem of appeal to sympathy, and uses the occasion for potentially interesting copy, close-ups of some dramatic but one-sided pictures of his own experiences and of fellow patients and attendants and physicians and social workers and the life of a "bootleg" sanitarium and two state institutions, with the double goal of getting his "love child" (first entitled "The Scrap Heap"), his book of diary-like notes, into print and on the market unchanged and of setting himself up as the anonymous helper of others—not through what the book might disclose and bring to the reader, but through anonymous correspondence.

There is little fundamental light to be obtained, much suspicion thrown on bad and good efforts alike, and a grave doubt as to whether the reader who seeks literary value, or the reader who seeks a better understanding of the needs and chances for help for a drinker, will get a reward for following the author through the 289 pages of narrative and pertinent and sometimes gratuitous jottings. The best statement comes on the last page:

> I have at last found the cure for drink. Selfishness. Plain, simple, rank selfishness. Set up your weighing scales. In one pan put all that life can give you—with it. In the other pan all that life—without it—can give you: wife, sons, home, friends, health, happiness—plus, gentlemen, a peculiarly compensatory trickle up your backbone (some might even call it manhood) when a man offers you a drink and you can smile comfortably and say, No. And mean it.
>
> Plain double-entry bookkeeping; black or red.
>
> I am backing the black. That's all.

This is not a real summing up, but a good ending. It is a good sample of the style and also of the author's mode of reasoning, the best constructive passage of the book, a kind of after-thought. How he reached this lucky ending and this effective type of selfishness, the book does not disclose or help one to find, perhaps not even to seek. Something in the author's nature and in the use he has made of what our blundering civilization chances to offer to the alcoholic—in spite of his apparent incapacity to seek and give help by open and frank collaboration—has set him up again. May he stay there and prosper.

What makes me say what may look like unfavorable criticism is this:

The patient certainly has been a problem to himself and to his family and to those who finally had to assume responsibility. He must have heard of "selfishness" often in his life and may have practiced it very often. What kind of selfishness helped him and how did he learn to use the supposedly helpful kind? The point is this: His drinking got him into a state in which "selfishness" was his second nature and principal trait: the craving and the suspicions against his best helpers and the inability to attain a frank realization that there are times when the individual is no longer his best manager and when one does well to accept the best consensus of one's friends and helpers. Raising difficulties called for the consultation that led the patient to the "bootleg" sanitarium in which he was maltreated. Inability to be frank and open, partly fundamental and partly increased by the alcohol and the delirium, made it impossible to get on a footing of collaboration. There really was in him the beginning of the delirium when the barred window led him to fight and so to give an excuse for the disastrous straightjacket. There were persistent delusions of infidelity and threats which, in the story at least, the author does not try to clear up and on which he seems to have taken only his own counsel, and only on a trifling point—that of the nurse.

Now the question arises: Are we going to promote better conditions by creating suspicions and distaste for all the present efforts with journalistic exploits? Is glorification of all the prejudices and misinterpretations of intentions of existing laws and one-sided display of conditions a helpful procedure in an anyhow difficult situation? Is it wise and safe to open a kind of anonymous information and guidance bureau where there are plenty of keenly interested persons and agencies that could give the ex-patient a wider view and effective help and also an unquestionably receptive hearing concerning all he may have to offer? This is where selfishness lurks in the background and comes into conflict with the best intentions of the author: perpetuation of prejudices and distrust.

The best instance of a different procedure is that of C. W. Beers. It is true that even in the recent edition of his book "The Mind That Found Itself" there are passages which belong to the realm of morbid interpretation of happenings during his sickness and they are not corrected. But Beers rose to constructive collaboration that led to the work of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene. Nobody asks for perfection, but it is a downright pity to see a capacity and an opportunity receive a twist such as is reflected by the jacket of the book, for which the author may not be wholly responsible.

## Jesse Lynch Williams

IN the sudden death on September 14 of Jesse Lynch Williams the *Saturday Review* not only lost in common with the country an author of ability and repute but as well a Director who had been associated with it since its inception in 1924 and who was ever its good friend.

Born in Sterling, Illinois, Mr. Williams was graduated from Princeton College in 1895, and three years later received from the university the degree of Master of Arts. In 1919 he was awarded a Doctorate of Literature. Beginning with "Princeton Stories" in 1895, Mr. Williams has shown himself a prolific and versatile author over a period of more than thirty years. Perhaps his greatest distinction was achieved in the Spring of 1918 when he received the Pulitzer award for the best American play produced during the previous year, for his comedy, "Why Marry?" He was the first winner of the Pulitzer dramatic prize.

It was not the first play Mr. Williams had written. He had been experimenting with the dramatic form for nearly twelve years when "Why Marry" was produced, and had already seen a Providence production of his "The Stolen Story," a dramatization of his very successful early short story. In 1922 "Why Not?" was produced here, and three years later "Lovely Lady" in Washington, D. C.

In 1921 Mr. Williams was elected president of the Authors' League of America, succeeding Rex Beach. Among his books are "History of Princeton University," in collaboration with John De Witt; the Adventures of a Freshman," "My Lost Duchess," "Mr. Cleveland, a Personal Impression," written after he had lived as a friend and neighbor of the former President in Princeton, and "The Married Life of the Frederic Carrols."

Robert Bridges, the Poet Laureate, who is now in his eighty-sixth year, is about to publish a long philosophical poem which is said to contain some of his finest work.

## The Sinner That Repented

CORA POTTS: A Pilgrim's Progress. By WARD GREENE. New York: Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

HERE is a success story more faithful to life than the average biography of an industrial leader, and as purely American as the history of Sam Houston or Daniel Boone. It is Mr. Ward Greene's suggestion that with the passing, seventeen or eighteen years ago, of the American red-light district, "something of sturdiness and lustre passed too." However that may be, there is sturdiness and lustre, and a vast gorgeous humor, in this tale of the graduate of a red-light district who made herself rich in the patent-medicine industry and eventually married into the Southern aristocracy.

Cora Potts, at the beginning, seems poor stuff for a heroine—just a fat, moon-faced, country girl, crude, ignorant, not even amorous. But she had the indispensable instinct for success that brings a man or a woman to the top; whenever she fell, she managed to fall up the ladder, not down. The critical point in Cora's life was the seven years she spent as Thelma LaMont, madam of the Mansion down by the railroad tracks in a middle-sized Southern city. Mr. Greene permits only brief and occasional glimpses of the advance of her education, at the hands of college boys, scions of the local nobility, and visiting Elks; but if the transformation is not completely pictured, enough of it is there to make plausible the process which eventually turned Thelma LaMont into Mrs. Genevieve Potter, smart and suave, who desperately yearned to break into the society of Atlanta despite the fact that her money came from a process for making black niggers white.

She might never have made it, but for the war that weakened social barriers and opened careers to talent. Sheltered and pedestaled Southern women found it hard to raise money for the Red Cross and the starving Armenians; but when all others failed, Genevieve Potter put the drives over the top (though when she had first heard of the starving Armenians she thought they were a poor but proud old family next door) because at the Mansion she had learned how to make women hustle for money. The debutantes who worked for her in the war drives liked her; they and their boy friends enjoyed her easy and gracious hospitality; for, as she said, she had always been used to having a house full of young people. And if the method by which she eventually married into the inner circle seems somewhat dubious, you cannot feel sorry for her husband; he got an extremely competent wife and had better luck than he deserved.

Mr. Greene is said to be a newspaperman. A cruel copy reader could have improved his book. However that may be he had the good sense to realize that he had hold of a great comic story which would tell itself if the author only kept out of the way; and he never underlines the obvious. At first you laugh and shudder at Cora, but at the end you give her three hearty cheers. If the process that brings you to this is not art, it achieves a result that many artists may envy.

The book will probably be assaulted by the guardians of our morals, so it is worth while to observe that it exemplifies the loftiest precepts of Christian morality, as set forth in the greatest of parables. There is more joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine persons that need no repentance. And if Cora did not reform until she had observed that respectable people had bread and to spare while unemployed prostitutes perished with hunger—why, neither did the Prodigal Son.

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# Round about Parnassus

By William Rose Benét

THIS inaugurates a new department solely devoted to the reviewing of books of poetry and general comment upon the art. Books will necessarily be treated in a somewhat desultory fashion, although the department head will endeavor to the best of his ability to bring some sort of order out of chaos—by which we mean to imply that books of verse published today are of such wide variety, and so many in number,—to say nothing of collections of verse drawing upon the work of many writers,—that the task of properly assimilating and distinguishing the virtues and defects of all is a severe one. Regular reviews of certain books of poetry selected as the most important will, as usual, appear in other columns of this periodical, by other hands. Discussion in this column of current books will be varied upon occasion by reference to work more ancient.

We do not intend to write a mere series of paragraphs taking up each new volume in turn and docketing its virtues and defects. We shall exercise no categorical imperative. We shall discuss current books of poetry according to our own peculiar views, and if any disagree with us they are at perfect liberty to take exception in writing to our criticisms, providing their communications do not run to such length as makes it impossible for us to refer to them in whole or in part in this department. When we receive any communication which seems cogent or contains a point well taken, we shall print it with our own comment upon it. We shall probably as frequently be in error in our judgments as are most critics. We shall approach the volumes we treat in no strict chronological order. We may also make a passing comment upon some recent book of poems which has been reviewed elsewhere in *The Saturday Review*, comment running counter to an opinion there expressed. Well, that will simply be our own opinion for what it is worth. You are at perfect liberty to make up your own mind.

There is, at least, a wealth of verse being produced today. And rather a large proportion of it is not entirely negligible. Hence this department, which will, in its ruminations, wander back and forth over the whole field of the art. Naturally we cannot undertake to comment at the same length upon every book that comes under our cognizance. We hold a roving commission. And that is probably enough preamble. Certain more or less recent books of poetry are before us. Of these we shall write. Each week they will be replaced by others.

* * *

Two recent collections of Edgar Allen Poe have delighted us, for we are a Poe admirer. The first is an anthology of Poe's best work in criticism, in poetry, and in the short story. It is edited by Addison Hibbard, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at the University of North Carolina, with a general introduction by Hervey Allen who wrote "Israfel, the Life and Times of Edgar Allan Poe." It is an excellently selected large volume, though we should rather have seen it arranged with the poetry as the first section and the criticism as the last. We had almost forgotten how Poe enriched several of his most remarkable tales with some of his poems of greatest genius. "The Haunted Palace," of course, gems "The Fall of the House of Usher," but could you have named "The Conqueror Worm" as originally appearing in "Ligeia" and "Thou wast that all to me, love," in "The Assignation"? By the dates of publication appended to each poem and story we see that "The Conqueror Worm" was published in *Graham's Magazine* something like four years and three months after it had appeared in "Ligeia" as verses whose authorship was attributed to the strange lady of that tale. Conversely "To One in Paradise" was incorporated in "The Assignation" first published in *The Southern Literary Messenger* in July, 1835, though the poem by itself first saw the light of print in *Godey's Lady's Book*, January, 1834. And strangely, in the later case, the perfect, terminating lines

> In what ethereal dances
> By what eternal streams

are changed to

> In what ethereal dances,
> By what Italian streams

while the following incredible supplementary verse is added:

> Alas! for that accursed time
> They bore thee o'er the billow,
> From Love to tirled age and crime,
> And an unholy pillow—
> From me, and from our misty clime,
> Where weeps the silver willow!

The whole poem is, in the story, referred to as being written upon the interleaf opposite a passage in Politian's tragedy "The Orfeo," by a renowned and mysterious stranger in Venice. Thus did a character in one of Poe's lesser tales all but ruin one of his most beautiful poems!

But the question of Poe's defects, as is noted by Howard Mumford Jones, who writes the introduction for a limited edition of "Poems of Edgar Allan Poe," recently beautifully printed by the Spiral Press of this city "is an absorbing one." He follows this with the best concise excuse for them that we have happened to run across, as follows:

> But the astonishing thing is not that Poe exhibits these defects, but that these defects are relatively minor in the small body of his work. Anyone who has read much of American lyric poetry in the thirties and forties of the last century must know that only by the miracle of his own strong, assertive genius did Poe escape from the defects of that amusing age. It was the age of "female" poetesses; the age that saw in N. P. Willis a great and astonishing genius; the age that thrilled to "The Psalm of Life" and worse; the age of Mrs. Mowatt, Lyman Beecher, Peter Parley, and "Maria del Occidente," and if it was also the period of the great New England writers, it is to be feared that readers did not always discriminate between the poems of Emerson and the poems of Thomas Dunn English. It was, in short, the age of "elegance," and I think the best way to estimate the astonishing achievement in pure art which Edgar Allan Poe represents is to read Meade Minnegerode's "The Fabulous Forties" and then to read the lyrics in this volume.

"The Book of Poe," we neglected to mention, is published by Doubleday, Doran, and the same firm has recently brought out one of the great dramatic poems of the world remarkably illustrated in line and in color by Elizabeth MacKinstry. We refer to Ibsen's "Peer Gynt," for we strongly feel that it belongs with the great poetic dramas of all time. In fact it overtops almost all modern poetic drama save perhaps Hardy's "The Dynasts." It is an extraordinary epic of the soul. Among Miss MacKinstry's interpretations of certain symbolic personages in the poem we particularly liked her hornèd woman, and her view of the Button Moulder.

As we have spoken already of a publication from one esthetic press we should also here take note of the fourth book issued by Nancy Cunard's "The Hours Press" located at Chapelle-Réanville, Eure, France. It is Richard Aldington's poem, "The Eaten Heart," modern commentary upon a legend of a knight and troubadour of Roussillon which is briefly outlined as prelude. The book is hand-set, attractively bound, and consists of two hundred signed copies, after the printing of which the type was distributed. While it is not one of Aldington's best works it is of decided interest.

Last year, through Harold Vinal, William Stanley Braithwaite brought out the sixteenth annual tome of the "Anthology of Magazine Verse and Year Book of American Poetry," which has grown in size and completeness with each succeeding year. It is truly an heroic winnowing when one stops to think of the labor of reading all the poems appearing through the year in such many and various American periodicals. Mr. Braithwaite's introduction does not find the present situation in regard to poetry in the forty-eight States satisfactory. But he does claim that facts and figures, even of the pessimist, prove "the optimist's contention that poetry of late has been looking up." In fact, today it sells better in book form. Nor is this entirely, in the case of the largest sales, due to the Book Clubs. Mr. Braithwaite cites the fact that though Edwin Arlington Robinson's "Tristram" went out to but about 10,000 subscribers (the early clientèle of the Literary Guild at that time) the total sales of this poem at the time of his writing were nearly 70,000 copies. He calls attention also to Miss Harriet Monroe's organization, the Poetry Clan, which sends out to subscribers six volumes of poetry a year, and may well be on the road to acquiring at least a thousand members. He refers to 25,000 copies being sold of Dorothy Parker's "Enough Rope," and to Samuel Hoffenstein's "Poems in Praise of Practically Nothing" running through seven editions.

As for the verse he has gleaned from the magazines, in running through the entries we have not, on the whole, been greatly impressed. There are present a number of well-known good workmen, a number of rather promising new-comers. Themes are varied. There is quite a bit of originality in the themes and there are pictures and impressions that linger. But the trouble seems to us to be the growing bulk of the collection. It could have been cut in half, at least, without losing the best. Mr. Braithwaite's taste is a whit too catholic. He is too inclusive. This is chiefly due to his earnest search for new merit, his generous desire to surprise some treasure in periodical literature. Better poetry, it is true, is to be found there today than has been the case in the past. And new work by poets of considerable contemporary stature often now appears in the magazines. For anthologists of the future his shelf of collections will be a supplementary boon, supplementary that is to the works of the poets themselves. To specializers in contemporary verse the results of his assiduous ferreting are necessary. But assimilation of, say, half a dozen books a year by the best new writers of verse, English and American, will be of more value to the average reader. We append here and now, as we shall append every week, the titles of three at least fairly-recent books of poetry with which we think *Saturday Review* subscribers should be familiar.

WINTER WORDS. By Thomas Hardy. The Macmillan Company. 1928.

CAWDOR, AND OTHER POEMS. By Robinson Jeffers. Horace Liveright. 1928.

ANGELS AND EARTHLY CREATURES. By Elinor Wylie. Alfred A. Knopf. 1929.

# The Jalna Clan Again

WHITEOAKS OF JALNA. By Mazo de la Roche. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by Allan Nevins

"JALNA," the Atlantic prize novel of two years ago, a story of exceptional originality and richness, did not demand a sequel. It was probably written without thought of one. But for two reasons it was a novel particularly well adapted to extension in another book. Its emphasis was upon character, and the development of its principal figures—the tyrannical centenarian grandmother who had migrated from England via India to Ontario, the redhaired young master of the Ontario estate, Renny, the two old English uncles with their aroma of Victorianism, Ernest and Nicholas, and the sharply differentiated young people, Eden the poet, Piers the yeoman, and Finch the callow youth—might well be pursued through new vicissitudes. Moreover, "Jalna" broke off just after a family crisis which left a number of these persons at loose ends. Eden had fallen in love with Piers's wife and been thrust out of the house, his own wife, Alayne, had left him and gone back to her New York position, and the unity of the family had been violently disturbed.

Miss de la Roche has produced a book which every admirer of "Jalna" will enjoy and wish to keep, and which should make new friends for her talent; but naturally enough, she has fallen a shade short of the fine, fresh inspiration of the first tale. This is evident in more than one way. Whereas in the first book the characters exhibited themselves in a wholly natural fashion, here the author is a bit intent upon exhibiting them. We watch her put them through their paces and make them live up to the reputation for salt individuality which they acquired in the earlier volume. The grandmother has to be more tyrannical then ever, the parrot harsher in screaming its Indian oaths, Renny more masterful and fascinating, Finch more wistfully appealing, Eden more irresponsible and unmoral. Again, this time Miss de la Roche tells a story in which plot counts for a little more than it should, and the long arm of coincidence is stretched to its full length more than once. When Uncle Ernest visits New York City, for example, he accidentally runs square into the long-lost Eden, now penniless and ready to collapse; the sort of accident that might occur once in a million times, but occurs more than once in this short book. And at the end the probabilities have to be squeezed again to provide us with a completely happy ending.

Nevertheless, it is once more a rich and finely readable story that Miss de la Roche has given us. The chapters which describe the last days of old Gran, and which hold us in suspense to learn upon which member of the great Jalna clan she has bestowed her hoarded fortune, would alone make the book a welcome acquisition.

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## The Bowling Green

# John Mistletoe

III.

AS vanished as the *Just Suits*, a coarse and forgotten tobacco that was favored in Mistletoe's own coterie of conscientious smokers, are the moods, simplicities, dolors and merriments of the student era. But smile at it as you will, the world we knew then was fairly sane. It was not magnificent, but it was peace.

In the mind of the undergraduate there was always—perhaps still is?—a pervasive awareness of now being a college Man. This implied a serious obligation of Knowing About Life. To be awake after midnight (at which hour the dormitory lights were shut off at the power-house) and finish a card-game by candles, to consume late pannikins of cocoa with olives and crackers and argument about God, to read *Tom Jones* or Boccaccio, to visit the burlesque theatre in Philadelphia, these were recognized forms of philosophical initiation. Going Fussing, as calling on young women was then always known, was respected as an inevitable concession to destiny, but hardly regarded as Seeing Life.

Mistletoe's class—I speak of the era 1906-1910—rather enjoyed fancying themselves as a group of hard cases; they blithely imagined that rarely had so lively and virile a posse of humorists been gathered. How weary of their bumpkin antics their enduring dominies might well have been: their senseless japes and horseplay, the parrotings of a thousand generations of students which themselves believed so fresh and new. Yet it is pleasant to think of that green julep of freedom that ran in the young bipeds. Crude as it was, it was better than the dull mannerly conformity into which the mass output of American alumni soon subsides. For the usual youth that short four years is his only period of fantasy. As soon as he leaves college the docile creature yearns for his destined servitude, from which he rarely again emerges. Likely it is better so. The wise man in his time kisses many chains.

"A guarded education in morals and manners" was the statesmanlike phrase always used in the college catalogue to describe its purposes; a thoroughly prudent and liberal Quaker policy. Behind apparent liberty such as dazzled many boys of seventeen or eighteen, a shrewd and watchful observation was alert. But in spite of discipline a good deal of cheery exploration was possible.

* * *

The bohemianism of college boys is well standardized. Naive souls, how scandalized we would have been to realize that any Dean with plotting paper could have sketched beforehand the exact parabola of our curve of experience and predicted every co-ordinate of our supposedly unique conduct. In the few cases where zeal carried the young experimenter over the edge of the plotting paper it did not take the authorities long to hear about it; the two-handed engine was at the door. For the most part our sallies were fairly innocuous, resulting in nothing more unseemly than an occasional misdemeanor in the late smoking car from Broad Street. The Red Lion, long a famous tavern in Ardmore—now I believe the cafeteria of a motor-truck factory—was visited for beer. The Casino burlesque house in Philly was a steady resort for the student of drama. Mistletoe and I were profitable patrons of that rump parliament, but better than any of the ladies of Billy Watson's Beef Trust (not to be confused with William Watson) I remember the bored air of the large paternal man who stood sawing on the bull-fiddle. It amazed us that he could be so unimpressed by the elevated proximity of so much haunch of Venus. Mistletoe always contended that the burlesque show was the lineal descendant of the Tudor spirit, and I fear that some of his relish for carnal mirth can be traced to the old show-house on Walnut Street. In that stage-door alley floated the exhilarating odor of grease-paint. Have you ever considered the delightful Seven Ages of Man offered by the various tones of grease-paint? As you find them listed in the make-up box they compose a perfect Shakespearean sequence:

1. Pink
2. Very Pale Juvenile
3. Juvenile Hero-Flesh
4. Juvenile, Robust
5. Sallow Young Man
6. Flesh, Middle Age
7. Robust Old Age

The period I think of now may be described as a moderate blend of Juvenile, Robust, and Sallow Young Man. Sometimes Sallow had the upper hand, as when, after tremulous waiting in the rain outside the stage door to invite some Casino soubrette to a glass of beer, the hobbledehoys fled in sudden panic; otherwhiles Robust prevailed: Mistletoe enjoys remembering a Chinese restaurant on Race Street where these juveniles, in delicious rake-hell glamor, sat at table with some rather jetsam madams and listened to professional anecdotes. The zenith of that episode was when one of the ladies, saying "It's a shame to waste it," tucked an unfinished chicken-leg inside her stocking to take home to her dog. Such evenings were as good as Maupassant. Perhaps, in a guarded education in morals and manners, they had their useful contribution. I think it was probably a strong Stevensonian influenza that impressed the sophomore J. M. with the social importance of harlots.

* * *

The exceptional thing is the thing unduly remembered; let me not give exaggerated prominence to harmless escapades into the Debateable Land. More in routine, certainly more approvable by the faculty, were the excursions on Ninth Street where the dioscuri of culture were Leary's and Lauber's. To Leary's famous second-hand bookstore I have paid full tribute elsewhere; for three generations it has yeasted the dumpling temperament of Philadelphia. These boys, buying there their first copies of Chaucer, Wordsworth, or Tennyson, would then proceed to Lauber's "German Restaurant and Wine House" a block or so up the street. The 50-cent table d'hôte dinner was plentiful and accompanied by a musical trio which was excellent. But what lifted Lauber's to the status of education was that there Mistletoe ordered his first own bottle of wine. There was a California claret, 35 cents a quart in that dulcet era; I dare say it was meagre and brackish, and I know we secretly disliked it; but it was claret, which we had read about in Tennyson, and nothing else would do. By some miracle of prognosis Mistletoe has saved one of Lauber's menus all these years, and I see that he has put a sentimental tick opposite that claret on the wine list. Lauber also served most of his wines on draught; claret at "10 cents per schoppen" seems a pleasantly German touch. The date on the menu before me is January 29, 1910, and I see that by the time the young bohemians got there from Leary's the Hamburger Rauchfleisch mit Erbsenbrei was all gone, for the waiter has pencilled it out.

The smart set among undergraduates used to visit a renowned café they called tautologically The L'Aiglon, but it was an overdressed Bailey Banks and Biddle sort of place compared to the homely and burgherish old Lauber's. Lauber took wines seriously, and an inquiring youth could learn something. How excellent to make virgin experiment among parsimonious half-pints (at 25 cents) of Liebfraumilch and Assmanshäuser; or India Pale Ale at a nickel a glass. A dollar an hour was what one earned by tutoring indolent classmates in math., and those dollars were scrupulously divided between Lauber and Leary. What the two L's symbolize is certainly as important as the three R's. To discover the poets for one's self, and to learn to drink decently, with a sense of ritual, are part of a gentleman's education. As you move on from Juvenile, Robust, toward the epoch of Flesh, Middle Age, it is well to avoid the fatuity of rearward praise. The speakeasy of the better sort has many charms, including the paramount one of raising the death rate among numbskulls, but at its best it lacks something of the good human dignity of a place like Lauber's.

(Those who have known sea bathing can never again be wholly content with swimming in fresh water. There is always a subtle taint about it: it stings the eyes and strangles in the nose. Similarly, if you have ever enjoyed the tidal freedom of a community where the necessities of the artist are understood and respected, it is sometimes perplexing to be immersed in the muddy shallows of the United States of Agility. That sounds like a hard saying, but I prefer we should remark it about ourselves. If Moses could draw up a constitution in ten prohibitions, it seems as though we shouldn't need nineteen. We are beginning to realize what the French meant when they spoke for years of British and American hypocrisy.)

* * *

But visits to Philadelphia were rare, and I give a falsely Latin Quarter impression of a college life almost entirely rustic. *Non doctior sed meliore doctrina imbutus* is its motto—a quotation whose provenance not even the faculty classicists have ever been able to place for me. Like the Latin mottoes of respected publishing houses, few of the inmates can parse them or even know they exist. But to that good plea against raw sophistication the college has honorably adhered. If I seem to import an irrelevant tavern flavor, that is of my own private sentimentality. We lived mostly without benefit of orgy; no place was ever less bohemian in spirit. It never even occurred to it to want to be; the peccancies of Mistletoe and his cronies were surreptitious and unauthorized. One of the best of memories is of a volume of Ben Jonson bought at Leary's and *The Alchemist* read aloud with a companion (and shouts of laughter) in a field of cornshocks beyond the college.

I have looked back over some of Mistletoe's notebooks, and I find that he has learned very little in twenty years, about literature anyhow, that they didn't tell him then, or try to tell him. I get a twinge of wistful amusement in some of the old memoranda: as for instance when the poor young scholiast, alongside the purplest stanza of the Eve of Saint Agnes, set innocently down the notation that *shielded scutcheon* was an example of "pleonasm." That, entered perhaps by dictation, was a mere childishness of pedantry, but every child is properly a pedant. The only danger is in his remaining so. You must start him off hunting for rhetorical oddities, which may be just as much fun as parlor games; perhaps eventually among pleonasms or metonymies he may become aware of what lies behind rhetoric, the burning human mind. It would be wrong to suppose that because he jotted down such naivetés on the margin he did not feel the thrill of Keats. In fact a 75-cent Keats bought from John Wanamaker—not from Leary, because he wanted one utterly his own, with no reminiscence of any previous reader—has been one of the most important things that ever happened to him. To this day he remains one of the few who can tell you offhand what day of the year is Saint Agnes' Eve. The very pages of that poem are loose in the book because he used to read it in bed and fall asleep on it. We were lucky at Haverford in having in the Roberts Autograph Collection one of the most beautiful and terrible of Keats's letters to Fanny Brawne. I doubt if many of the boys were enough interested to go and look at it, but I know one who did. He can still call to mind the actual handwriting of those words at the bottom of the sheet, describing his love. "Tis richer than an Argosy of Pearles."

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

# Thinking of My Little Boy

By TU FU

Written about the year 756

Translated by FLORENCE AYSCOUGH

CHI TZU! it is Spring, we are still apart!
The song of the bright oriole, the warm weather verily but sharpen my distress.

Cut off, separated, I am startled by the change of season;
With whom can I talk of your quick perception?

Of the mountain torrent which pours its water beside our pathway in the lonely hills?
The rough branches which form our gateway in the hamlet surrounded by old trees?

I think of you, and in my sadness find no comfort but in sleep;
Leaning on the balustrade I warm my back and doze when the sun shines after rain.

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# Books of Special Interest

## A Poet Gone Wodehouse

THE SUN CURE. By ALFRED NOYES. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation. 1929. $2.

Reviewed by JOHN CARTER

ALFRED NOYES is known to most people as the writer of rather melodious verse of a rather Tennysonian timbre. In this book, however, he has gone stark, staring P. G. Wodehouse and has done it rather well. The one trouble with him is that, like the proverbial postman on a holiday, he cannot forget his true vocation and here spoils the effects of a very pleasant little jaunt into midsummer madness by introducing a lot of rather tasteless propaganda against free verse and the New Poetry.

Basil Strode was curate at St. Margaret's in Chalkdene. "He was a potent and eloquent preacher, had a pleasant voice, and got considerably less flat than the vicar himself when intoning the litany." He was also in love with Barbara Lane, daughter of the Admiral, who liked him but found him too unenterprising. He was an exponent of "muscular Christianity" and—for shame!—an enthusiast for the New Poetry. One day when he was out of sorts with life he received a letter from a friend extolling the "sun-cure," which consists in stripping oneself naked and lying in the sun.

He decided to try it. Finding a secluded spot, he stripped and fell asleep. While asleep, his clothes were stolen by a local tramp, Double Dick, whose bid for fame consisted in an ability to "drink a small quantity of paraffin with mustard in it without being ill." Realizing that to be caught in this condition would bring such ridicule upon him as would necessitate his leaving the parish, Strode tried to get home undetected.

It took him several days and he had such adventures in the meantime as provide very pleasant if not side-splitting entertainment.

Unfortunately, his adventures were not over. His disappearance had caught the attention of a passing journalist who started a "silly season" hue-and-cry for the Missing Curate. Fortunately, his lawyer is able to extricate him from his difficulties, the Curate marries the Admiral's daughter, and his contact with nature has taught him to scorn the New Poetry. On his return from the sun cure he receives a circular advertising a new example of the art which Mr. Noyes detests.

> He dropped the circular into his waste paper basket, went over to his book-shelves, picked out half a dozen slim books, tore them into small sections, and rammed them down on top of the circular.

This little touch, together with others which litter the pages of an otherwise entertaining bit of summer fiction, serves to show how regrettably the poet has allowed his own antipathies to induce him to engage in that type of trade-propaganda which consists in crying down your competitors' wares. Mr. Noyes has written a sufficient quantity of the Old Poetry, and of a sufficiently high quality, to render such tactics unnecessary and objectionable. "The Sun Cure" is good reading, apart from that, and shows that an adept at the difficult art of poetry is qualified to perform in the less austere and less exacting task of diverting the hammock reader in the dog days.

## A Post-War Novel

SCRAPPED. A Novel by META SCHOEPP. Adapted and translated by LOUISE TAUSIG. New York: Covici-Friede. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by AMELIA VON ENDE

THE havoc wrought by the war in Central Europe furnished fiction and drama rich material for more or less true pictures of the economic and moral débâcle of certain classes and the rise in the social scale of those who were smart or unscrupulous enough to profit by it. As the passing years separate them from the actual events, German writers are acquiring that perspective which insures an objective view and suggests authenticity. Meta Schoepp is a name well known to the German reading public, and it is easy to believe that the plot of her story is founded upon facts and her characters upon real persons.

She presents both sufferers and profiteers in types so well portrayed as to cling in one's memory. The Stauffens, grandfather, father, and son, and the latter's friend Dietz Reuter, are figures that we seem to have met in the Thiergartenviertel or striding along the Wilhelmstrasse. Tante Maria is a type of impoverished nobility which was not rare even before the War. Frau Kogel and Lia Waldow, too, are not necessarily new types. They revive memories of the new wealth that poured into Germany with the French milliards sixty years ago and was responsible for the Siegesallee, the atrocious architecture of the Kurfürstendamm, and other evidences of bad taste. But Frau Schoepp knows her German women of today and she has made those two women more venturesome, more eager for certain experiences, than were their female ancestors.

The initial chapter in which Dietz cuts off the gilded buttons with the anchor and crown of the navy and replaces them with ordinary bone buttons, "that awed nobody, inspired nobody," while Fritz is studying the "wants" in a newspaper and is checking off those offering some possibilities, give some insight into the characters of the two war comrades, Dietz, the aviator, and Fritz, navy lieutenant. They get their first job with Kogel & Co., dealers in second hand automobiles, Dietz as handy man in the yard which resembles that of a junk dealer, and Fritz in the office. It is interesting to note the attitude of both towards the new order and of the representatives of that order in the person of their fellow workers, as it is that of the other characters. The childish joy of Stauffen, the father, when the generous Frau Waldow secures for him a position in a bank and his futile attempts at figuring out some percentages; the suicide of the grandfather, when after striding along the street in his general's uniform his defiant pose invites the insults and abuse of the holiday mob: all this is told by the author with enough detail to make it realistically convincing. There is an element of humor in the story, and certain of its scenes would be effective in comedy.

## Shadows Waiting

THE BURNING FOUNTAIN. By ELEANOR CARROLL CHILTON. New York: The John Day Company. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM

THERE are shadows waiting in this second novel of Eleanor Chilton, too. One feels them forming and massing on the mental horizon as the storm forms and masses in the opening scene of "The Burning Fountain." All through the book they wait, emerging just enough so that each character comes to know of their presence and to doubt, at moments, the reality of everything else.

The Kenwyns are a young couple whose lives lie in pleasant places. But they have not been content with merely this. They have taken life into their own hands, lived it consciously, planning and moulding it so that there might be no unavoidable ugliness and pain for themselves or others. They have two children by deliberate choice, a boy and a girl (nature will have to be permitted the credit for this last particular symmetry), and they will have no more. The stage is set.

And then comes accident. Caught up by passion in a moment when all nature seems at war with law, they bring into being another child. They are staggered by what they, who have builded solely on the creed of self-directed action, feel to be the wantoness of this embrace. So Lynneth, the child conceived in thunder, lightning, and in rain, is born.

Both parents, though unknown to each other, fear that she will be marked because of their primitive abandonment of all their principles. And as Lynneth grows older they see their worst fears are realized, that she is marked, is a strange, fay creature. Or do they only feel that she is different? Or has, somehow, their very attitude towards her made her so? But they can observe her effect on others. Always she is disturbing, bringing out in people deep hidden, disquieting selves. But Lynneth is never disturbed by them. She creates isolation for herself as unconsciously as she creates unrest for others.

The resulting inter-penetrating psychological states maintaining their precarious balance on the thin edge of foreseen disaster furnish the perfect material for the author's subtlety and clarity of perception. There is in this novel the same delicate distinction of style, almost mystical interpretation of nature, and scalpel-like analysis of personality that marked "Shadows Waiting." In the second novel the story obtrudes a little more than in the first and shows some forcing and inconsistencies to meet psychological and symbolic needs. But the same brooding, subterranean strain flows through them both, making for good and evil below the suave level of daily human amenities.

## Hawk and Herring

GOLDEN FALCON. By ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1929. $1.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

MR. COFFIN'S note used to be small and thin; it has become large—a little too large, perhaps—but it is still thin without being scrawny, high-pitched but not false. To continue the musical metaphor, the singer, by nature a quiet baritone, attempts a *tessitura* that would intimidate a heroic tenor. Therein lies his danger. The voice, raised an octave too high, becomes strained; one hesitates to look for fear of seeing the disheveled hair, the heaving breast, the operatic gesture. Mr. Coffin is a little too concerned with those effective high Cs which, with each repetition, grow less and less endearing to the audience; he relies too much on capitalized "Beauty," "Hunger," "Wonder," "Passion," "horses of Askalon, hounds of Provence" (rhymed, in theory, at least, with "avalanche"), "splendid Samarcand."

But Mr. Coffin rises above his rhetoric in the major half of "Golden Falcon." His very phrasing helps him when he writes of "holy hunger" holding the spinning earth "high and taut in empty space," or the pattern of birds with "winds in all their hollow bones." Built almost entirely on the symbolic image, it is no wonder that Mr. Coffin's verse revolves about hawks ("the cruel beauty of whet steel in upcurving wings"), herring ("an epic of yearning writ in white words, bodies symmetrical, bladed like swords"), cocks ("desire in feathers, flame on toes"), and wild geese "with necks like arrows on a bow." The hawk in particular is Mr. Coffin's emblem and it is no surprise to find it almost everywhere—even in such a projection as "Tall Men with Trumpets," of which this is the second verse:

*Captains of lost ships*
*Sitting by the sea,*
*Boys who dream October*
*And apples on the tree,*
*Hawks hanging in the blue*
*Like swords of Damocles,*
*The bee going bulletwise—*
*Prayer is made of these.*

The other *motif* (the male dominant) is developed in "The Cock," "Clown of the Zodiac," "Man-Child," "The Maker," and the "Hymn of Hunger," this verse from the last-named being typical:

*Hunger trumpets in the cock*
*Avid for the day,*
*Hunger blows the silver flutes*
*Of crickets nibbling at the roots*
*Of drowsy twilight hay.*

This is, in all probability, Mr. Coffin's transition period. We shall see him again. One hopes that his next appearance will be a little less *robusto*, but not less recognizable. It is no frail voice that can declaim:

*The Maker sits and hungers*
*Like a gull at dawn;*
*He casts forth his nebulæ*
*Like the frog's cold spawn;*
*His heart is in the great whales*
*And amoeba in the tide,*
*He goes to their feasting*
*As bridegroom to the bride.*

## A By-Path of the Classics

BIRDS AND BEASTS OF THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY. By NORMAN DOUGLAS. New York: Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith. 1929. $3.

Reviewed by RICHARD CURLE

FEW living writers possess so much out-of-the-way learning as Mr. Norman Douglas and none can carry it off with a lighter manner. As a student of zoölogy and of myths, and as a Grecian scholar and traveler, the subject of this inquiry is naturally attractive to him, and such is his art that he can take even the general reader along unprotesting on this quaint by-path of classical lore. The actual investigation may interest but few, yet Mr. Douglas's style is so easy and his remarks so frequently entertaining, that the main outline can be overlooked in the mere pleasure of perusal.

To find anybody who has made a study of the Greek anthology is sufficiently rare, and Mr. Douglas must be almost alone in having studied it from the particular angle he has chosen. But it is not simply an exercise in useless erudition. The attitude of the ancient world towards familiar things, the bounds of their observation and reflections, gives us a clearer idea of the dim past, besides helping us in the search after facts.

The poets of the Greek anthology wrote of birds and beasts in a familiar strain. They lived before the age of anthropomorphic sentimentalism and they did not indulge in rhapsodies. But their remarks are often charming in their naïve realism and have the flavor of unaffected spontaneity. They knew a good deal about the world around them and when their science fell short their imagination filled the gap.

Mr. Douglas is both a scholar and a man of the world. He has made those old singers live again and has added to our store of knowledge.

## Poetry of Revolt

AN ANTHOLOGY OF REVOLUTIONARY POETRY. Compiled and edited by MARCUS GRAHAM. New York: Marcus Graham. 1929.

Reviewed by CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN

WIDE and careful was the reading which searched through over a hundred writers classified as "Forerunners" for verses which could be called by any stretch "revolutionary." Shakespeare, Shelley, and Swinburne; Byron, Burns, Mrs. Browning, even Tennyson, are quoted, with our own earlier poets, Bryant, Whittier, Emerson, Longfellow, Lowell, Lanier, Poe. The second group, arranged as "Moderns," are quite as numerous, and much more explicit.

Such a range as this shows how wide and deep has been the sympathy of singers for the struggle and suffering of the poor, and how general has been their vision of a better and happier world. But there is nothing in Swift's vivid lines "On An Ill-Managed House," or in the scrap from Shakespeare called "History," or in Hood's remarks about gold, from Miss Kilmansegg, and many more, which hint at revolution.

Some are merely complaint, or lament; Henley's "Invictus" voices individual courage and endurance; the extract from Emerson, the two bits from Lanier, and Poe's fantasy, "Eldorado," and more, have no connection with the matter in hand. Nevertheless, there is enough of the spirit of revolt to mark the very general movement of the world against the senseless waste and injustice of industrial conditions which injure and debase human life.

The second section is much more to the purpose. It is far more personal, sprinkled with bitter grief and outrage of individuals, and thrilling with revolt. Still there are verses, as Jean Starr Untermeyer's "Clay Hills," or Max Eastman's "Diogenes," and others, which seem quite on the side.

Perhaps what makes the strongest impression is the repeated protest against labor itself; not insufficient pay; not too long hours; not insanitary conditions, but simply having to work. It is a natural enough feeling for those overworked at ill-fitted jobs, but it rouses a question in the thoughtful reader as to what we are going to do after the revolution has stopped the wheels.

This general aversion to work is neatly epitomized in Elizabeth Thomas's brief lines on "Labor":

*Brick walls built by Labor keep the sun away;*
*Towers wrought by Labor set cold winds at play;*
*Fires stoked by Labor make the dark sky gray:*
*So what is the good of Labor anyway?*

Under all the natural limitations of a too-well based revolt against long injustice, there shines through this collection a heartening conviction of the breadth and depth of the great economic movement of our time for justice in industry, and in the distribution of the products of industry.

This movement is by no means confined to "the workers" or to "the poor." Those who have felt it most deeply and led it most strongly have frequently been quite outside of mill and mine, as Karl Marx and Prince Kropotkin, for instance. It is a pity that so wide a movement should be confused with any special view of social reconstruction. The limitations of the anarchist theory, the narrowly propagandist introduction, will greatly restrict the usefulness of this valuable book.

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Dr. Luciano Laurinsich, Superintendent of Antiquities at the Dodecanese, has recently unearthed a Hellenic theatre in an admirable state of preservation on the island of Cos in the Ægean Sea.

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# Books of Special Interest

## Art in the Middle Ages

**ART AND THE REFORMATION.** By C. G. COULTON. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1928. $7.50.

Reviewed by FRANK JEWETT MATHER

THIS learned and able book is really a wholesale debunking of the Middle Ages as represented by such romantic writers as Montalembert, Rio, Ruskin, Henry Adams, and Ralph Adams Cram. It may be reduced to theses: Montalembert's artist monk is merely a sentimental fiction. All that can be proved is that there were a few artist monks, and that during the romanesque period the orders were the chief patrons of the artist. Next, the volunteer craftsman is a fiction. The masons and other artisans worked under economic conditions that can fairly be called modern, by the day or by the piece, under a balance established between the guilds and the employer. The picture of communities rising to build churches as local thank offerings is fundamentally false. Great churches were built largely by itinerant wage-earners, who followed the building trade about, much as construction gangs do to-day.

Similarly, the notion of the artist-artisan is vastly exaggerated. Before the turn of the Middle Ages, the craftsman was mechanically rendering another man's design, quite as it is to-day. A still heavier blow to the romantic historian, while the cathedrals displayed a systematic symbolism which at least the clerics could read, there never was in Western Christianity a standard symbolism that was legible for the humble believer. How speak of a universal symbolism when the hedgehog at Amiens, which actually denotes the deserted city of Zephaniah, might equally mean within the pages of a single commentator the corrupt and self-seeking priest or the perfect Christian? Next it is the turn of art as "the poor man's Bible." A very inadequate and unrepresentative Bible it was according to Mr. Coulton, ignoring scores of touching or edifying themes which were to attract the protestant painter Rembrandt. Here Mr. Coulton inadvertently, and most exceptionally, misses a trick in his play against Catholicism. The medieval themes were generally limited by the liturgy and the events of the Christian year; the selection was Roman Catholic rather than broadly Christian.

With the Ruskinian theory that the Reformation and Renaissance brought a beautiful art to an untimely and tragic end Mr. Coulton has no patience. Long before the Renaissance and Reformation, medieval ideals were crumbling from purely medieval causes, under the impact of the conciliar movement and of churchly scholarship and of rising nationalism. Even the physical destruction wrought in the Protestant countries by the sectaries was probably less than that caused by the vanity of replacement in such constantly Catholic countries as Italy and Spain.

So far Mr. Coulton generally establishes his positions, using a prodigious documentation to good purpose. On all matters concerning building the book is a mine of information for the medievalist. For American scholars its conclusions are hardly novel, and scarcely warrant the acerbity with which they are at times presented. Mr. Coulton's butt is the romantic generation of Montalembert; he is largely discanting *de mortuis*. Still the romantic glamour dies hard, is still the staple of popular books, and one can hardly grudge Mr. Coulton his evident joy in demolishing the popularizers.

On the broader issue of the relation of art to religion in the Middle Ages, Mr. Coulton's views are far from persuasive. In general he minimizes, as a matter of personal opinion and without much evidence, a relation which seems obvious. He also introduces a subtle and difficult distinction between what was Christian and what was merely churchly as a source of artistic inspiration. He follows Luther in drawing off the Christianity and leaving as a sort of empty shell the Roman Catholic Church. There is a historical moment when such a decantation is practicable, but to make it retrospective for the entire Middle Ages is a feat that would have staggered those fine amateurs of distinction, the schoolmen themselves. Certainly no sensible medievalist would lay hold of so tenuous a thread as his guide through the labyrinth of the Middle Ages. We have already conceded the case that the sharp limitation of "the poor man's Bible" was due to the liturgy, that is to churchly authority. But this gives small comfort to the position that the best inspiration for art was the Christian residuum within Catholicism. For the glory of medieval art is precisely the liturgical themes. And a little Aristotelian logic will show us, that if residual Christianity inspires the best art, and the best art is inspired by the liturgy, then the liturgy and residual Christianity must be identical—*quod non erat demonstrandum.*

Apart from such contentious matters, this is a clarifying book, a book of massive and ingenious scholarship which a medievalist may not exactly take to his heart, but which he will respectfully put on his shelves. In details Mr. Coulton is generally convincing. On broader matters his exaggeration is as wide as Henry Adams's in the opposite direction, and perhaps even farther from the admittedly evasive truth of history.

## The Road to Wealth

MAKE EVERYBODY RICH. By B. A. JAVITS in collaboration with CHARLES W. WOODS. New York: B. C. Forbes Publishing Company. 1929. $3.50.

Reviewed by RICHARD J. WALSH.

AMONG the various isms that have agitated the world, perhaps the newest is "consumerism." Earlier reforms usually took the point of view of one class as against other classes. Socialism and communism regard their adherents as producers, and as such entitled to share in the use of the product. Only in recent years has there developed a philosophy of consumption.

As yet consumers have no solidarity. They have few spokesmen in public office. Strangely enough their best advocates are certain industrialists. In an earlier time, these industrialists—men such as Henry Ford and Owen Young—would have been condemned by the mere fact that they control production upon a tremendous scale.

The prejudice against bigness came to its climax about 1890 in the Sherman Act. But as Javits and Wood say in "Make Everybody Rich," this and subsequent anti-trust laws were demanded not by a body of consumers but by a "body of potential proprietors of independent business enterprises." Solicitude for the consumer was only the smoke screen. The attack was launched by and on behalf of small business men who were afraid of their big competitors.

Ever since, industrialists have been trying to deliver to the public the benefits of machine production and mass distribution, in spite of the anti-trust laws. On the whole they have done it pretty well. In many instances, however, they have been powerless. Timber is being cut at a scandalous rate because lumbermen dare not agree among themselves. Oil wells gush to exhaustion because oil men cannot safely get together.

Meanwhile the anti-trust laws which were supposed to protect the small independent business man have utterly failed of their purpose. "Profitless prosperity" is a strictly modern phenomenon. Big business is getting more and more profitable. Small business, while keeping extremely busy by virtue of the protection which the law affords it, is more and more likely to find itself "in the red."

Plainly the anti-trust laws are worse than useless. We have just about lived through the state of mind that produced them. Sentiment in favor of their repeal is growing but it is largely inarticulate. Javits and Wood, recognizing that it is still too soon to expect forthright repeal, make an effective argument for amendment. The proposal is simple enough. It is that the Sherman Act and the Clayton Act be amended so as to except combinations, monopolies, price agreements, and restraints of trade which are *in the public interest.*

As Mr. William T. Grant, head of the W. T. Grant Company, a national chain of department stores, said to the reviewer apropos of this book:

Messrs. Javits and Wood have struck the keynote that is responsible for the success of the business of the United States and upon which a much greater civilization may be built. The Sherman Act and the Clayton Act and other anti-trust laws were set up to prevent agreements against the best interests of the public. But unfortunately at the same time they prevent agreements for the best interests of the public. In spite of the popular belief that agreements and combinations of big business are always against the best interests of the public, it is coöperative movements of the right sort working for the good of the public that have made the United States a most materially successful nation. Messrs. Javits and Wood point out how the anti-trust laws can be aimed for the good of all. Besides that, they lay down a plan for human endeavor by which the poor man may have more material advantages and the rich man may have less material responsibility. If the ideas in this book were carried out they might well make this nation richer in happiness as well as in dollars.

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# Foreign Literature

## Lamps in the Sanctuary

LAMPADE NEL SACRARIO. By CLARICE TARTUFARI. Foligno, Italy: Franco Campitelli. 1929.

Reviewed by FREDERICKA BLANKNER

"AT last," Italy congratulates herself, "we have a true Italian colonial novel." The book is Clarice Tartufari's eagerly-awaited "Lampade nel Sacrario," the first novel by an Italian to concern itself directly with the emigrant and his life on foreign soil.

Thus in her latest work Tartufari continues from a new point of view in the purpose, defined in her earlier novels, of revealing the Italians to themselves. For though this time she has chosen a foreign background, Tunis, through contrast the French-African setting (a particularly delicate one for Italian emigration) induces a sentiment more poignantly Italian than could a native *locale*.

Interest for readers on this side of the Atlantic is heightened by the fact that one of the protagonists is an American girl. The United States is represented also by a visiting Italo-American.

For characteristic nobility of theme, for beauty and strength of treatment, for psychological expertness and range, "Lampade nel Sacrario" is a worthy successor to "Fungaia," "Il Miracolo," "Eterne Leggi," "Il Dio Nero," "Il Mare e la Vela," "La Nave degli Eroi,"—those earlier novels that both in Italy and through wide translation abroad have progressively confirmed the author in her position as a major and representative Italian literary artist.

"Lampade nel Sacrario" compels through its intense vitality. Whether evolved through successive chapters or sketched in a few lines, the people live. We feel their breath, see the beating of their pulses. Tartufari's realism is always balanced, synthetic,—physical-emotional-spiritual, — neglecting neither the animal nor the angel in man, neither the actual nor the dream. Cleanly and completely, unfailingly sincere, her eye looks at life like the eye of the sun.

The narrative comprehends the torments both of love and mortgages, the exigencies of both ambition and digestion. The author presents these folk of the *borghesia*,—the class she is fondest of treating,—with a faithfulness that is devotional. No happiness of theirs is too homely, no *nuance* of spirit too slight for her attention. With equal lack of hesitation she strips to barren nudity the occasional petty meannesses of certain of the characters,—their piteous weaknesses and piteous little desires. But wholly unobsessed by the predilection for drabness that taints so many modern realists, Tartufari does not falter in her description of intrusive moments that are sublime, such as Mario's luminous realization of his youth. And always any baseness is saved from sordidness by the author's humor,—the ordinary from insignificance by her idealism.

In the lives of these Italians, drifted like leaves from the mother-branch to the edge of Africa, persisting in spite of all difficulties in making their little homes (the little of the emigrants is monumental because created from nothing) Tartufari reveals heroism. She finds for us the poetry in the patience of the Sicilian women, in their faith, in their uncomplaining endurance and life-long unselfishness, epic in its elemental simplicity like desert or wind or sea.

The novel has a satisfying compactness. All details of background, situation, and characterization contribute to its essential unity, enforcing boldly or subtly the emigrant's sense of detachment, of bewilderment, of emptiness, of easeless lonesomeness for a country which he can never wholly leave,—to which, though separated from it by only the narrowest part of the Mediterranean, he can never wholly return.

## A Progressive Gospel

A MON GRÉ. By RENÉ GLOTZ. Paris: Au sans-Pareil. 1929.

Reviewed by ALBERT SCHINZ

WILL this be the book of the Messiah of post-war literature at last,—the book containing the gospel so long expected to come out of the confusion of recent years? It might almost seem so, judging from the concert of praises heaped on that "premier livre,"—praises not merely by some one critic, or by some coterie forming a mutual admiration club, but by hosts of men of various inclinations and reputed connoisseurs (such as Duhamel, Benjamin Crémieux, Pierre Bost). The little volume enters its fifth edition soon after the first, and it is launched by one of the firms *à la mode*, that with the shockingly bazaar-like name, "Au sans-Pareil."

One thing nobody can deny, namely, that the book has all the characteristics one expects to find in progressive literature. In the first place, as far as composition is concerned, it is duly chaotic; not the slightest indication of any plan, or order in the arrangement of the material; you can begin with a chapter in the middle, or with the last, indeed, most of the time in the midst of a chapter, without diminishing your enjoyment in any appreciable fashion. Then, it answers no description of any literary *genre;* it is not a novel, it is not a play, it is not a collection of essays, it is not criticism, it is not a book of travel, but at the same time it is all of these in turn. There are fanciful stories of the "Arabian Nights" type, others realistic, others of the psychological type (if they are not triangular, they may be multi-angular); there are pages on style that are reminiscent of Buffon's famous "Discourse on Style," but young authors are not supposed to know of great men having written before them; there are pages on Venice, on music, on death; and on love—which decidedly even modern literature does not succeed in avoiding.

⁂ ⁂

What we pretty well knew ever since Mozart, Musset, and indeed many others, was that Don Juan is the impersonation of profound and pure love. Plausibility is the *dernier souci* of Mr. Glotz, it goes without saying: "Je me penche sur mon Orient intérieur, et j'entends au fond de moi-même d'étranges appels de trompette." The style is for the most part lucid (and this *is* rather original), although at times Proustian, and containing poetic passages with duly interspersed crude expressions ("En somme . . . la lecture est une chaude-pisse intellectuelle"; a little poodle crosses the street, and *must* "lever la patte"). Above all things, the author insists that he is driving at nothing; the title is "A Mon Gré. But although the author never talks but of himself, his conscious self abdicates entirely to the hands of the unconscious. Far from making an effort to *create* something in art, he carefully sees that his senses be put to sleep ("endormir les sens. . . . Oublier un peu. . . .") before using his pen. What he offers? "Mon âme est une eau dormante sous laquelle tremble du rêve." That soul is "la haletante messagère d'un message *inconnu, qu'elle-même ne déchiffre pas.*"

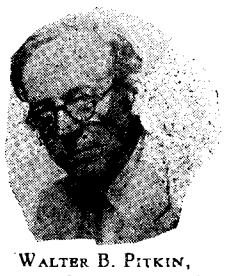
If you wonder why, unable to decipher his own message, he still wants to deliver it—which is all the more surprising as his "extases" exasperate him . . . "comme de contempler certains yeux de femme"—well, he admits that simply, he could not help it: "Mais il me *fallait* crier sur mon tréteau."

*Are "the* VIRTUOUS" *really* HAPPY?

*. . . . as Socrates claimed*

WAS Epicurus nearer the truth when he called it Pleasure? Or has the modern Philosopher—with his scientific approach to the study of personalities—at last captured the secret of this elusive Ideal, which often escapes the highly favored of the earth, and yet dwells with humble men?

Drawing on twenty years of rich experience in human behavior, WALTER B. PITKIN reaches, in this new book, some breathless conclusions concerning happiness. In outspoken, iconoclastic investigations into interesting lives of yesterday and today, he strips the veils from a series of characters, and analyzes in the light of modern behavioristic psychology the unbalance behind their desperate joylessness. Their moments of ecstacy are also broken up into their component elements. Garibaldi, D'Annunzio, Horace Greeley, Cardinal Newman, William Jennings Bryan, Vincent Van Gogh, Katherine Mansfield, Woodrow Wilson—these contrasting lives and many lesser ones chosen as types of our present civilization, provide a basis of astounding case histories for the first chapter in this longest story that will ever be told—the story of the nature, not of Man, but of *men*,—the intimate record of the ascent by *homo sapiens* to the realms of joy. ⁂



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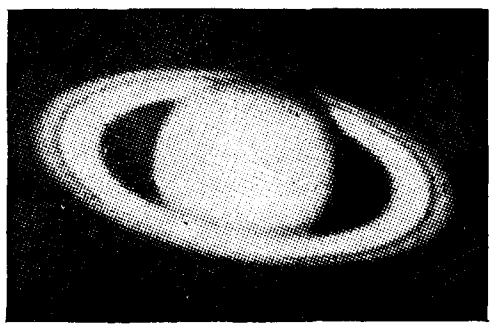

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* * *

The most distant nebulae which the human eye has so far seen in space is 140,000,000 light years from us. (Light travels at the rate of 186,000 miles per second.) For all but a 500th part of its long journey, the light by which we see this remotest of visible nebulae travelled toward an earth uninhabited by man.

* * *

At a moderate computation, the total number of stars in the universe must be something like the total number of specks of dust in New York.

* * *

Good news for celestial motorists: The stellar traffic is so little crowded that we would have to wait about a million million million years before a star ran into us.

* * *

In the ordinary air which you are breathing each molecule collides with some other molecule about 3,000 million times every second, and travels an average distance of about 1/160,000 inches between successive collisions.

* * *

When you heat a molecule it becomes very unhappy and dissatisfied with the place where it is, and goes away from there in a great hurry.

* * *

The sun is losing weight at the rate of over 4 million tons a second, or about 250 million tons a minute—something like 650 times the rate at which water is streaming over Niagara.

* * *

The earth solidified about 2,000 million years ago.

* * *

A million million years from now mountains and seas will exist only as traditions handed down from a remote and almost incredible past.

* * *

A setting for romance in 50,000,000,000 A. D.—Our moon is destined to contract its orbit until it is finally drawn too close to the earth and broken into fragments by gravitational pull. After this the earth will have no moon, but will be surrounded by rings like Saturn. (*Illustration above.*)

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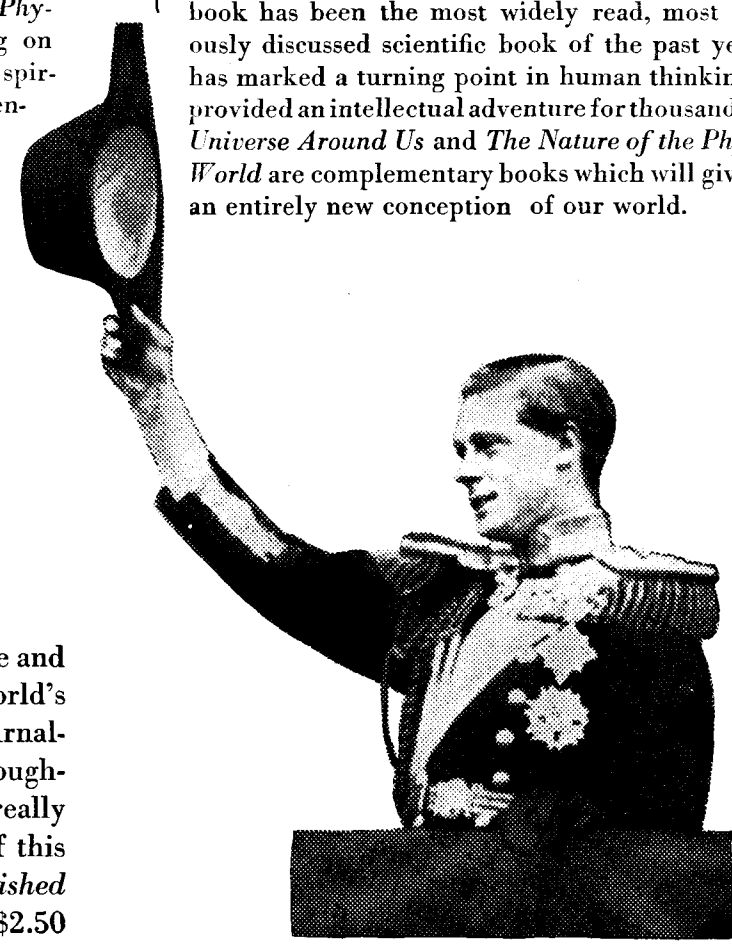

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## The Gossip Shop

By RACHEL FIELD

NOW it's September the crickets are at it again. No, I do not mean *critics*, though of course they are too, I mean *crickets*. Already echoes of publishing activity even so far distant as Childrens' Book Week have come to us off here to the east of Mt. Desert, on our special perch along the shore of one of the smaller Cranberry Isles. Indeed the Island mailbag has brought us no less than four announcements, two juvenile department catalogues, and as many as three childrens' books, so in spite of September crickets and reddening apples and mountain-ash berries on the Ellsworth road, we must follow the wild-geese south,—at least we must set our minds in that direction.

From Miss Lucille Gulliver and Little, Brown & Company in Boston, comes the announcement that the prize-winner in the recent four thousand dollar competition for the best story based on the principles of Boy Scout Oath and Law, is now ready. It is called "Three Points of Honor," and is by Russell Gordan Carter, with pictures by Harrie Wood, price $2. Cornelia Meigs, also one of the company's prize winners in the past, has another juvenile scheduled for publication September 21st,—"The Crooked Apple Tree." This time Miss Meigs has left her earlier field of historical romance to write of a group of present-day children on a hill above the Mississippi. There is also a new edition of an old favorite of ours, "The Boy Captive of Old Deerfield." This is a lively, well-written tale of the Indian raids in the Connecticut Valley, by an author living and loving the region of which she writes.

This seems to be a season for many song books for young musicians, which is unfortunate for us since we happen to be one of those people whose musical education was neglected. We can therefore make nothing of those little black dots on rail fences that we hear called notes and scales and clefs and so forth. They will always continue to be complete mysteries to us, so we can only say that "The Magic Music Shop" by Mary Graham Bonner, with music by Harry Meyer, pictures by Luxor Price, and published by the Macaulay Company, looks amusing, and is a very handsome affair with its fine orange and green covers. The idea seems to be to weave stories about the various instruments, piano, violin etc., with simple tunes thrown in. These, the publisher assures us on the inside jacket flap, Mr. Meyer has made easy enough for musical beginners. We trust this is true, but even so it leaves us far, far behind.

Another musical reproach to us is from E. P. Dutton & Company, "Fifteen Songs from 'Looking Out of Jimmie'." Not one of them can we even hum, but we gather, from those who can, that the music is better suited for parents' or teachers' playing than for children themselves. We are, however, already familiar with the verses by Helen Hartness Flanders. Many of these are spirited and gay, though others show a slight straining towards oversimplicity. The Jimmie of the poems is the author's small son, and evidently intended by the publishers to be their American Christopher Robin. Speaking of that young gentleman, we see on another page of the Dutton Catalogue a songbook called "The Hums of Pooh." Perhaps we are beginning to feel less sorry about our musical education!

From Josiah Titzell, an erstwhile Island guest-of-the-month, we have news of Payson & Clarke's first venture in the juvenile book line. As has already been announced in these columns, this is Blaise Cendrars's "Little Black Stories for Little White Children," and the tales are written out of the same primitive background that made his "African Saga" so notable for older readers. Margery Williams Bianco has translated the text and there are to be numerous wood-cuts, and, we understand, full-page illustrations sent direct from France and tipped in. But we shall have to wait till the middle of next month to see.

Once last winter Helen Ferris kept us fascinated for hours describing a book she was working on, founded on letters she had received from girls all over the country telling her in confidence how they met and overcame their own special handicaps. These answers have all been culled now and the result is a book that ought to do much to help other girls who are trying to find a way out of those difficult problems of the early teens that make so much trouble and go by so much more complicated names later on. Helen Ferris calls her book "This Happened to Me"; it is to be published by Dutton at $2.

Just the other day we watched a group of girls and boys aged from thirteen to nine reading with chuckles and absorption the picturesque tale of "Abby in the Gobi," written and illustrated by Florence Choate and Elizabeth Curtis, and published by Robert M. McBride and Company at $2. Abby is the last of the Dinosaurs, a more than difficult rôle for her to fill, but she certainly lived up to our expectations. Her efforts to care for the jungle-offspring make merry reading for young and old though the more humorous subtleties of the book will appeal specially to adults wearied with reading the usual type of "Animal Story" aloud. As for the pictures,—they are really splendid affairs, far and away the best work of these two artists.

And now we are going to cover the old Underwood to go cranberrying in our own particular jungle the other side of the Island.

## Reviews

TOMAHAWK RIGHTS. By HAL. G. EVARTS. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1929. $2.

Reviewed by FRANK G. APPLEGATE

THIS is a most entertaining story of the advancing American frontier at the closing of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, with the scenes laid in that great region which extends from the Ohio River on the east to the Mississippi on the west. It is well written in Mr. Evarts's best manner and anyone starting to read it will be reluctant to lay it aside before he reaches the last line.

The leading character is Rodney Buckner, who, when a young boy, is captured by Indians and adopted by a Shawnee family and brought up as an Indian. Later he is ransomed by his uncle and taken back to Virginia where be becomes acquainted with the trappings of civilization. Afterwards he returns to the frontier where, with all the knowledge of the white man together with the cunning of the Indian, he becomes a super-frontiersman. There he becomes involved in Indian wars, individual battles with renegades and white outlaws, and conflicts with land-hungry pioneers who flocked in on the heels of the frontiersmen like locusts on an east wind. The love interest of the story is furnished by Buckner's falling in love with a white girl, but since "Tomahawk Rights" is an adventure story, the love element is made subordinate and is used only as a lure to draw the hero into further adventures.

The author gives us glimpses of all the famous frontier characters of that time—Daniel Boone, General George Rogers Clark, the Hern brothers and many others whose exploits had no chroniclers such as had those of the frontiersmen of the far west in later times.

## A Neat Pastime

CLIPPER SHIPS DONE IN CORK MODELS. By PETER ADAMS. Illustrated by MADELAINE KNOLL. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1929. $1.25.

Reviewed by CAPTAIN DAVID BONE

LISTED as a book for children, ages eight to twelve years, this little book by the author of "Cork Ships and How to Make Them" has interest for even the most aged of grown-ups by reason of its informative and simple prose. Not that the children, as the parties principally aimed at, are deprived of one jot of their due in instruction as to the making of simple and beautiful toys, but Peter Adams hits two targets at one twang of his bow. Undoubtedly a seaman of ability, and possessing no casual knowledge of his subject, he includes in his text a reminiscence of the

(*Continued on page 162*)

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# Tide House

*Maude Caldwell Perry*

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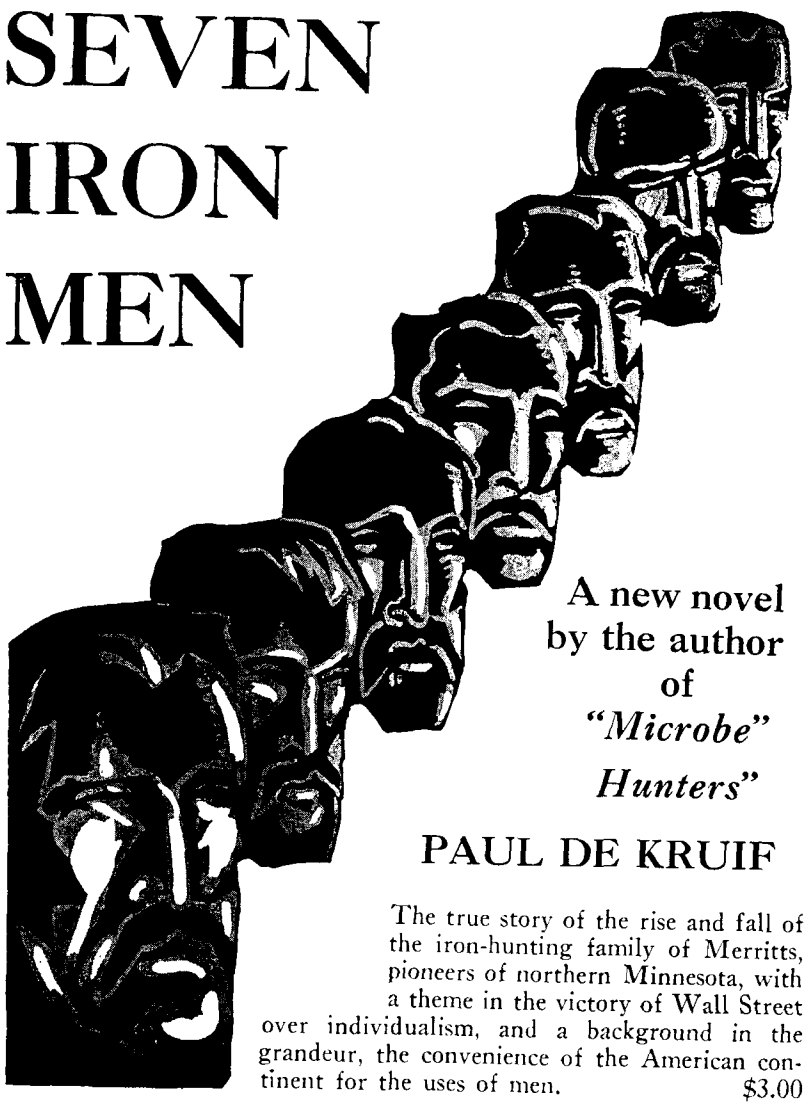

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## THE MAGIC ISLAND
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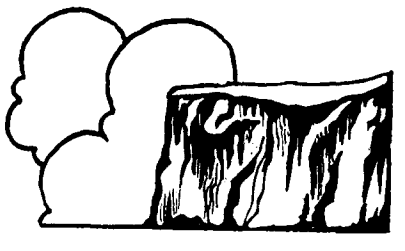

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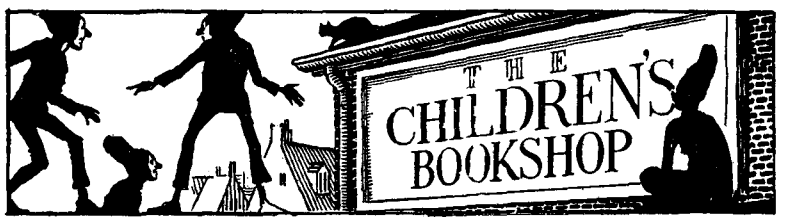


(*Continued from page* 160)

great days of sailing ships and seeks, by the best and most difficult of all artifices, straightforward writing resembling speech, to impart some measure of his own pride in American shipbuilders, American clippers, and American seamen, to the reader, be he eight or eighty.

A cork or two; some pins and glue; a sheet of paper; paints—he shows how a model can be made. One might hesitate to dub the resultant creations faithful to the originals, but if even one curious craft grows under his teaching, Mr. Adams has done service in arousing an interest in the form of ships, the qualities of ships, the indefinable savor of ships that may, later on, lead to an abiding interest in the deeds of ships and the far voyages of their sailors.

Much of the text in this little book is directed towards this end. We are informed as to how the American clipper ship came into being; gain knowledge of the great shipbuilders and their combat with the age-old conservatism of the sea; learn how the ships were sailed; by cunning intermezzo, the author provokes our interest in the crews that manned these master creations of the shipwright's art.

The Chesapeake Clippers, . . .

Around the period of the War of 1812, there was a fleet of small, swift vessels in the waters of Chesapeake Bay which were the direct predecessors of the clipper ships. They were used to great advantage as privateers. On account of their speed and ease of handling they were very effective in sinking or capturing the lumbering merchant ships of England, and on more than one occasion were able to elude the slower, though much larger, heavily armed ships of war of the Royal Navy.

. . . Let us suppose that we are members of the crew of one of these "Baltimore clippers." Her name is the *Alciras* and she is a low, black vessel of about 350 tons, rigged as a brig. . . . The skipper is a tough old bird from Rockland, down in Maine. He has a name for ruthless bravado and daring seamanship. . . .

By no agency but the very simplicity of his text, Mr. Adams imbues alike the childish speller-out and the sophisticated reader with a visual reality of great days under sail.

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THE CHILDREN OF THE CAVE. By E. H. THOMPSON. Boston: Marshall Jones Company. 1929. $2.

Reviewed by A. M. TOZZER
Harvard University

A RESIDENCE of thirty years in Yucatan has provided local color in abundance for Mr. Thompson's book for children. Hiding from the dangers of a Mexican revolution, three American children (who are the author's), born in Yucatan and speaking the Maya language, accompanied by native servants, wander for days, in a Swiss Family Robinson sort of way, through an almost interminable cave in Yucatan.

Many and varied are the adventures of the little band. Dangers appear and are caused to disappear through the resourcefulness of nature, the acumen of the natives, and the knowledge of the children. A miraculous Maya temple and a beautiful priestess, who keeps the virgin fires, are seen at one place. The inevitable archæologist, looking for hieroglyphic inscriptions, is found trapped in the cave. It is needless to say that he is successful in his quest.

Folk-tales, nature-lore, and former experiences are the main topics of conversation. The children are constantly telling the tales of the country as told them by their father. The servants are no less intelligent with a perfect knowledge of the art of extrication from all difficulty. Nothing daunts the small company in spite of the numerous vicissitudes. An ancient Maya tilting stone trap, for the former elimination of the aged, almost succeeds in putting an end to the story. It is here that the Professor, with a knowledge of the ancient custom, succeeds in freeing them from this peril.

Finally, they enter an ancient subterranean tomb and escape upward to the world above by means of a shaft coming out at the top of a temple mound. They find the revolution over, and they rejoin their anxious parents.

This story of fact and fiction has rather more background than the ordinary adventure tale and it does give an excellent picture of many of the ancient customs, the habits of the animals, and the character of the ancient population. The didactic side is not too strongly emphasized, thrilling adventures keep up the interest of the youthful reader. The book is quaintly illustrated by the author's daughter, Abby May Thompson.

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MOCCASIN TRAIL. By REED FULTON. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1929. $1.75.

Reviewed by T. MORRIS LONGSTRETH

THE boys who read "Davy Jones's Locker" last year and filed Mr. Fulton's name in their memories, will find that he has kept faith with them in "Moccasin Trail." It will rank close to first among the season's adventure books. From the moment that Bruce West chucks the hornets' nest under the skirts of that "powerful nasty nigger," Black Susy, until he emerges from the Indian camp, comparatively safe in his blazing wagon, with a father, a fortune, and a potential fiancée, this sixteen-year-old boy lives almost exclusively on gasps of excitement. And it is excitement skimmed from the bubbling kettle of fact. Mr. Fulton has selected from, rather than exaggerated, the annals of the Santa Fé Trail. Men of 1835 required good nervous systems to travel the Comanche country with Kit Carson. And Bruce's perils are augmented by a pursuing plantation owner who is worse than careless with his firearms!

Boys will guzzle this story nor question the pyramiding suspense where winged coincidence flies high. But, critically speaking, the calmer portions of the book are the best. Mr. Fulton's style is flexible, with humor lurking humanly about. He has courage for the harsh detail. His picture of Kit Carson, the Leatherstocking of the Plains, is lively and credible. It is clear that the author who could create Black Susy off-hand and introduce Carson in the brief but picturesque lariat scene, will interest himself in work of greater fictional varacity than this.

---

A FOREST STORY. By JOSEF KOZISEK. Illustrated by RUDOLF MATES. Translated by RAF. D. SZALATNAY. Edited by HELEN MURPHY. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1929.

Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN

POTTERY and embroideries have now for many years familiarized the public with the bold juxtaposition of gay colors that lends so brilliant a liveliness to the products of Czecho-Slovakian craftsmanship. How eminently adapted is this peasant art, with its clarity of design and vividness of contrasts, to the illumination of books for the very young, this slim volume with its lavishly decorated pages most effectively proves. Here is a riot of color—strong, crude greens, blues, reds, and yellows—that rivets attention, and amply serves the naïveté and straightforwardness of the stories it is used to illustrate. Even the child too young for the simple narrative that accompanies the pictures will enjoy them, while the child old enough to follow the fortunes of the small creatures of the fields and woods whose adventures, ingenious and amusing, are recounted, will, of course, derive added entertainment from this bright-hued portrayal of their incidents. The general effectiveness of the book is enhanced by the blue and yellow border circumscribing its pages, as is that of the prose narrative by the pleasing introduction now and again of verse. The slight tales have the poetic quality so inherent in folklore.

---

### A SUGGESTION

The child who is old enough to read periodicals, and discriminating enough to differentiate between the good and the less good that appears in their pages, would in all probability enjoy compiling a scrapbook from their contents. Stories, articles, poetry, odd bits of humor and wisdom, whatever strikes his fancy could be cut out and pasted into a capacious album, there to be stored up for reference and rereading. Pictures, too, could go into its pages. Such a record is not only enjoyable to its maker during the years when his interest still lies in the matter it contains, but would prove interesting when reread in maturity.

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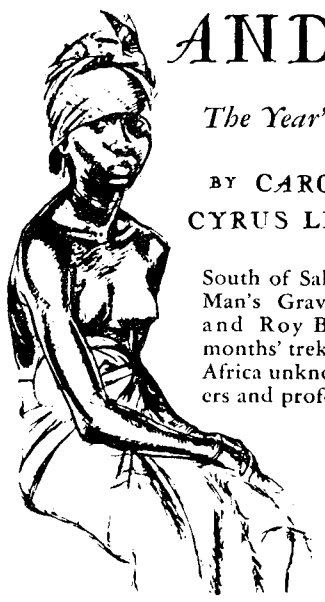
# WHITE AFRICANS AND BLACK



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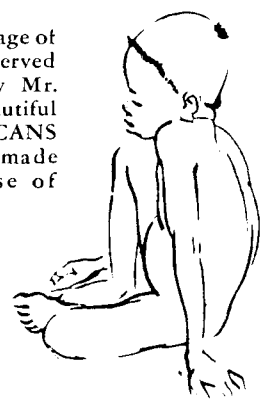

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by Helen Beauclerk

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# The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

## Belles Lettres

THE LITERARY WORKS OF COUNT DE GOBINEAU. By *Arnold H. Rowbotham.* Paris: Champion.

A NEW APPROACH TO POETRY. By *Elsa Chapin* and *Russell Thomas.* University of Chicago Press. $2.

NOCTURNE IN ST. GAUDEN'S. By *James Sydney Johnson.* American Institute of Graphic Arts.

THE EIGHTEEN-SEVENTIES. Edited by *Harley Granville-Barker.* Macmillan. $4.

KINDRED ARTS: Conversation and Public Speaking. By *Henry W. Taft.* Macmillan. $2.50.

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN LITERATURE. By *John Mattheus Manly* and *Edith Rickert.* Harcourt, Brace. $2.25.

A HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE. By *Emile Legouis* and *Louis Cozamian.* Macmillan. $5.50.

TRADITION AND HUGH WALPOLE. By *Clemence Dane.* Doubleday, Doran. $2 net.

THE AMERICAN NOVEL. By *Grant Overton.* Lippincott. $1.

WHY I AM A JEW. By *Edmond Fleg.* Bloch.

ALL IN THE FAMILY. By *Theodore Roosevelt.* Putnam. $2.50.

## Biography

GOETHE. By *Jean Marie Carré.* Coward-McCann. $3.

CHILDHOOD IN EXILE. By *Shmarya Levin.* Harcourt, Brace. $3.50.

THE COMEDIES OF SHAKESPEARE. Decorations by *James Daugherty.* Harcourt, Brace. $3.

## Drama

HOW TO SEE A PLAY. By *Richard Burton.* Macmillan. $2.

A DICTIONARY OF ACTORS. By *Edwin Nungezer.* Yale University Press. $5.

## Economics

MONEY. By *D. H. Robertson.* Harcourt, Brace. $1.25.

WERTHEIM LECTURES ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS. Harvard University Press. $3.

## Education

ENGLISH ARCHITECTURE. By *Arthur Stratton.* Lippincott. $1.

HEALTH HABITS. By *S. Weir Newmayer* and *Edwin C. Broome.* American Book Co.

THE WAY TO KEEP WELL. By *S. Weir Newmayer* and *Edwin C. Broome.* American Book Co.

THE HUMAN BODY AND ITS CARE. By *S. Weir Newmayer* and *Edwin C. Broome.* American Book Co.

TATTERS. By *Margaret J. McElroy* and *Jessica O. Younge.* American Book Co.

THE PLAYROAD TO HEALTH. By *S. Weir Newmayer* and *Edwin C. Broome.* American Book Co.

FOUNDERS OF OUR NATION. By *Reuben Post Halleck* and *Juliette Frantz.* American Book Co.

WORLD HISTORY IN THE MAKING. By *Albert E. McKinley, Arthur C. Howland,* and *Matthew L. Dann.* American Book Co.

## Fiction

MURDER AT BRATTON GRANGE. By JOHN RHODE. Dodd, Mead. 1929. $2.

Here's a book designed to earn the scorn of all true lovers of detective stories. The author cheats most abominably. The title itself, as a matter of fact, is a little on the shady side, but the real dirty work appears in Chapter IV wherein the author, in his own person, says one of his characters did certain things which he later is shown not to have done. It's very lamentable, and, what's worse, not really necessary. Sir Hector Davidson's body was found in a Ford truck at the door of his country house, very dead, with a home-made wire stiletto in his heart. A heavy box supposed to have contained valuable machine-patterns was gone from the truck. By the time Doctor Priestly, with much going over and over of the same ground, gets to the solution the murderer has been tried and acquitted, and is beyond the law. He has, however, a deadly disease which can be trusted to remove him in a year or two.

THE LISTENING POST. By GRACE S. RICHMOND. Doubleday, Doran. 1929. $2.

Grace S. Richmond's gift of handling with pleasant ease people and situations in which the good always eventually predominates has won for her a large circle of readers who will be very well pleased with his latest novel, "The Listening Post." Perhaps it is the well-intentionedness of the author shining through the well-intentionedness of characters that gives them some glow of reality even when they are most put upon to bring the story a desired turn towards a desired end. Mrs. Richmond writes about people whom people like.

In this case the people are: Judith Kent, beautiful, vital, and red haired (has there ever been a Richmond novel without a red-haired character?); her husband who leaves her to go a-ranching in the west; Dr. Kennedy who comes to her as a friend, and much more than that gossip said, after her illness, and ever so many others, all in need of something, all broken in some way. And since the healing of human beings as individuals, never in classes, is the delight and concern of the author in all her fiction, she turns an experienced hand here to the building up of these men and women and the several light romances which woven in together make up "The Listening Post."

THE PRIVACITY AGENT, and Other Modest Proposals. By BERNARD K. SANDWELL. Dutton. 1929.

Canadian writers, indeed Canadian people, are indistinguishable from Americans. One can usually place a Virginian as at least coming from the South, probably a Middle Westerner or Far Westerner, possibly a Bostonian; but I know of no signs by which a Torontoan can be told from a Buffalonian, or even a Montreal man from a Philadelphian. And Professor Sandwell's satire resembles less that of his more broadly humorous colleague at McGill, Stephen Leacock, than it does the satire of Samuel Crothers of Boston. It is not so clever, but it is in the same tradition of Holmes. There is more in it than ingenious bantering. The Privacity Agent reminds us of Mr. Crothers's Independent Order of Turning Worms. The revolt of quiet people, who wish to possess their own souls in peace, and who, being quiet, do not reveal their multitudious numbers, has already done something in the way of zoning laws, and of curbing the painful signboard, but that something is not much. Mr. Crother was for organizing the powers of disturbed privacy into a sort of secret society. Professor Sandwell suggests a professional adviser, but admits that privacy to most who want it and have it not, is a luxury, and a privacy agent would render a difficult and high-priced service. He invents the word "privacity" in order to obtain a balanced opposite of "publicity."

PRIVATE SECRETARY. By ALAN BRENER SCHULTZ. Simon & Schuster. 1929. $2.50.

Is life beyond the frosted doors of big business as full of wise-cracking, flirtation, and general whoopee as "Private Secretary" would lead one to believe? If so, why do the people who spend their days in offices spend their evenings at musical comedies? The two seem so much alike. So no wonder Alan Schultz's novel is amusing, and no wonder it is a little unconvincing, in its initial ebullience. The whole first half of the book is a running fire of modern badinage with every conversational opening answered on the spur of the moment with exactly the snappy retort which in real life can only be thought of hours after the party is over. No one, from the telephone girl, who must be awarded the belt for eight-cylinder repartee, down to the much less loquacious mother of the heroine, ever fails to hit the epigrammatic nail squarely on the head.

But out of this fusilade of persiflage May Linden gradually emerges as an individual. It takes half the novel to materialize a person out of a private secretary. Mary's problem objectively is what shall be her relations with the three men she has succeeded in drawing to her—Jim, elegant, successful, and self-centered; Ronny, writing advertising and dreaming art, fascinating and undependable; and the sturdy, steady, unexciting Joe. But, subjectively, Mary's more fundamental problem is the complete externality of her being. She must always be getting things, amusement, comfort, assurance, from the world about her, because within her there is no world. She has set herself a goal that can almost be weighed and counted. If circumstances and impulses turn her from it, that is never because she has guessed its secondary nature.

EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN. By COMPTON MACKENZIE. Macy-Masius. 1929.

To treat Lesbianism, ancient or modern, as a theme for jest and light laughter is a task requiring a more classical outlook than Mr. Compton Mackenzie seems to possess. Pierre Louys accomplished the feat magnificently and joyously in "Les Aventures du Roi Poussole," but Louys was by nature a non-moral Alexandrian who moved smilingly at perfect ease along the most corrupted currents. Mr. Mackenzie is merely

(*Continued on page 166*)

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# The New Books

## Fiction

(*Continued from page* 164)

an Englishman on a moral holiday—which is a less inspiring spectacle. In "Extraordinary Women" he has transplanted Lesbianism from Ægean to Tyrrhenian waters and from the day of Pericles to the day of Mussolini; he has also reduced it from passion to sentimentalism, thereby, naturally, making it both more objectionable and less interesting.

The scene of the novel is the now familiar and, alas, beginning-to-be-tiresome island of Sirene, where Mr. Mackenzie's ladies of mellifluous names—Rosalba, Rory, Lulu, etcetera—bask in Mediterranean sunlight and indulge in their sub-tropical emotions. The characters are insufficiently amusing to justify their existence as a mere spectacle, and of other purpose in the book there is no sign. It is, of course, utterly impossible for Mr. Mackenzie to be long dull at a time; indeed, there are many pages written with something of his old verve; but there is no grip upon his central theme. It is a far, sad cry from "Sinister Street" and "Sylvia Scarlett" to "Extraordinary Women." The most satisfying thing about the book is the binding, which, with its mauve and black colorings and delicate symmetry of lines, is worthy to house the work which Mr. Mackenzie ought to have written.

THE MAJOR'S CANDLESTICKS. By GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM. Bobbs-Merrill. 1929. $2.

The Reverend J. J. Meldon whose jovial garrulities did so much to make "Spanish Gold" a treasury of chuckles, serves again to enliven Mr. Birmingham's newest farce. With the same ingratiating wit and effortless ingenuity—those unique Gallic and typically Birmingham qualities—the Reverend continues to move metaphorical mountains and subdue the lion in his lair. A jollier friar, a more resourceful fictional companion you would look far to find.

At times the sheer inventiveness of this novel beggars the imagination. J. J. lets nothing stand between him and the recovery of Major Kent's seven silver candlesticks from the muddy bed of the river Shannon, where the Major lost them in his haste to flee from the insurrectionist insanity of the Irish Free Staters. The colorful curtain before which this clever tale is enacted is of Ireland in its dogdays, corrupt, factious, and childishly naif.

What richer soil in which to sow the dragon teeth of invention! What more practiced planter than the Reverend J. J. Meldon! A more diabolic cleric with a genius for making simple situations complex there never was in the history of contemporary comedy.

If it is whimsy you like and a laugh that broadens over 334 pages, then it is "The Major's Candlesticks" you should be reading. If it is information you are wanting about the Irish, then it is Mr. Birmingham who can give you more of it in his neat, humorous, and sardonic way than you are likely to get from the profound proletarian dramas of Mr. Sean O'Casey.

LABYRINTH. By GERTRUDE DIAMANT. Coward-McCann. 1929. $2.50.

Writers of promise, like precocious children, are often disappointing in their subsequent ineffectuality. Gertrude Diamant has been hailed as such for some time now, and the flurry of applause provoked by her fledgling attempts in the short story line was as flattering as any young author could wish. Unfortunately, however, a writer cannot show promise indefinitely. The crisis of a first novel arose, and "Labyrinth" almost stammers in its self-consciousness. The author made an attempt to do something new and significant, but was handicapped by a lack of anything important to convey.

There is no story, and, after reading to the bitter end, one realizes that no character is any more important than the others. A false impression is created in the opening chapter that the two artists there introduced—men suffering from the shock of war (and the War, by the way, has become monotonous as a first premise)—might do something or find something later to solve their problems of adjustment, but this expectation is relinquished long before Poldy commits suicide or Lewis awakes from a good night's rest to find that he is his old self again. Everyone in the book seems to be suffering in some degree from hyperæsthesia; "his eyebrows looked like the stringy roots of something growing inside the head" to one character, and so on and on in this world of exposed nerve ends. Miss Diamant's people are neurological charts explained for the layman through revelatory similes, but to no purpose.

This must be a "psychological novel." Not the kind that reveals motives or gives meaning to action, but a new kind that makes you feel that you have just made a trip through a psychopathic ward, unequipped with the proper background to justify such a trip. The condition is obvious, but what about it?

THE BOY PROPHET. By EDMOND FLEG. Translated by D. L. ORNA. Dutton. 1929. $2.

It all began when Claude was five years old. He was walking in the garden of Notre Dame with his nurse. A man in a cassock stopped them and said, "What a pretty little chap, a real Infant Jesus." But when the nurse murmured, "He is a little Jew, Father," the man said, "What a pity!" and walked away. From that time Claude's life was devoted to finding out what it meant to be a little Jew.

The Seine swirls around the Isle-Saint-Louis, and to and fro across the bridges goes Claude, sometimes accompanied by his little Catholic friend, Mariette. As he grows older he keeps a kind of diary and it is this diary which Edmond Fleg has transcribed in "The Boy Prophet," an exquisite thing, as firm and fragile as an ivory crucifix. It tells of the boy's tender mother and of his father, the fine ironic rationalist who has long since left the synagogue; it reveals the boy's agonized, precocious introspection; with light humor it shows his debt to the Boy Scouts; it traces his desperate endeavor to become a Christian through love of Mariette the devout, who can pray for the Jews but never marry one of them; above all, it follows his struggle to discover the faith of the Prophets amid the arid desert of Jewish formalism, the fasts and forbidden meats, the six hundred and thirteen commandments. Will Claude end as a Christian like Mariette, a rationalist like his father, or a Jew like the rabbi his instructor? Note quite any of these. He is a mystic and he sees the mystic vision.

> There was a great light, and in that light a great Cross, and on that Cross Jesus, bleeding, agonized. And he said:
> "The Messiah of Peace, the Messiah of Justice, he whom I wished to be, he whom I was not, the Messiah, hasten his advent."

On the Fourteen of July, amid the falling fireworks, Claude tells Mariette of his vision. Horrified, she runs from him. Jesus not the Messiah!

> "I shall go to the convent. I shall stay in the convent all my life."
> "Mariette! Mariette!"
> "I shall pray for the Jews, I shall pray for the Jews all my life!"

And Claude?

> Would it be right that Mariette should pray for the Jews all her life and that I should do nothing for them?"

So, a skeptical devoted prophet, he goes to Palestine among the Zionists, and the diary closes.

EAGLES FLY HIGH. By E. B. DEWING. Stokes. 1929. $2.

There is a type of personality so tenuous, so fragile, that it seems a breath of influence must destroy it which yet in the face of bitterest opposition maintains itself in its integrity. Such a personality is Selena Martin of "Eagles Fly High." In spite of an annoyingly personal, from-author-to-reader style, this strange, aloof Selina grows in her convincing personality until, by the end of the book, no one of her inexplicable moods or moves can be repudiated. Selina *is*, she may not be explained, but she cannot be denied. However improbable her end from her beginning, it is the improbability of life rather than of fiction. But Selina is surrounded by lay figures whose inadequacy is doubly apparent in contrast with her simpler reality.

The scenes about Selina and the people with whom she lives most closely in contact are constantly changing. At one time she is an ill-paid sewing girl, at another she is one of the best-known designers in New York. She becomes the wife of an unknown professor in a small western school, later she has for husband a wealthy, Jewish New Yorker. One summer she spends on a New England farm with an intense little Russian hunchback, another season finds her luxuriously and languidly in Paris, the center of fashionable interest. Her first decisive act is one of sharp, unthinking impulse; her last, of grave, considered sacrifice. Yet she has been Selina through it all,—taking from experience only that which would make her more herself, letting slip from her everything that was alien.

(*Continued on page* 168)

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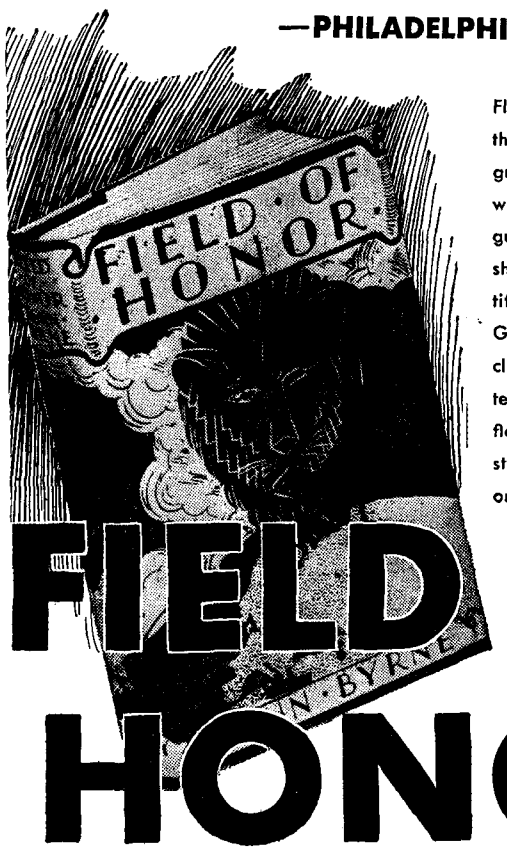


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**Thought-Control in Everyday Life, by James Alexander.** Published several months ago, this book is reaching an increasingly large number of readers weekly and another printing (the 4th) is on the press.

Many, many readers agree with that eminent citizen and ex-editor of *The Ladies Home Journal*, Edward W. Bok, when he says: "It has in it the qualities that would make thousands more intelligent about themselves, happier, more cheerful and more successful. It is a veritable path to know thyself and the path in this case is very easy to tread; arguments are easily understood; methods are clearly expressed; we see ourselves in a clear looking glass. As a so-called 'self-helpful' book I know not its equal for simplicity and easy understanding."

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# The New Books

## Juvenile

(*Continued from page 166*)
(*The Children's Bookshop appears on pages 160 and 162*)

IF YOU WANT TO FLY. By ALEXANDER KLEMIN. Coward-McCann. 1929. $2.50.

What boy, or girl, as a matter of fact, does not dream of soaring far above the crowded cities and rolling country side, piloting his or her own airplane? Unfortunately few fully realize the technical knowledge that a good pilot must acquire to do so safely. "If You Want to Fly" is a decidedly different book from any other we know of written about the science of flight. Not a bit of all the highly technical and important theory that now controls airplane design and flying has been omitted, but it has all been put into a very palatable form; a story about Peter Jones and his Uncle Jim Dawson. In doing so the author has not sacrificed one iota of truth and fact for the sake of fiction. Here is an outstanding example of what can be done for boys with difficult technical data. Professor Klemin is a well known aeronautical expert, whose experiences date from pre-war days and who has written many technical articles, built airplanes, and flown them, and is now the head of the Aeronautical School of New York University.

CAPTAIN MADELEINE. By MARY CONSTANCE DUBOIS. Century. 1928. $1.75.

This is the story of fourteen-year-old Madeleine of Verecheres, who, in the days when Canada was New France, held her father's fort against an attack of hostile Iroquois bent on recapturing a French boy and girl who had taken refuge in the fort. The girl, Agnes de Clermont, had been for three years a kindly treated prisoner of the Mohawks, who regarded her as sacred because of her blue eyes and light hair. The first part of the book is devoted to her stay among these People of the Long House. The communal life is accurately, if lightly, sketched. To the modern mind Miss DuBois's portrayal of the flowery symbolism of the Indians' speech, and their almost ritualistic formality in certain matters of polite behavior, are so at variance with their known brutality as to seem incredible. There is ample verification, however, in Edna Kenton's "The Indians of North America," which is an abridgment of "The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents," a source book of first value.

The main theme of Miss DuBois's story is the heroism of young Captain Madeleine, and her success in outwitting and outfighting the Mohawks. The most captious parent will find it as wholesome as a glass of milk, and as innocuous. What is more important, most children will find it thrilling enough to read twice.

## Miscellaneous

FATAL KISSES. By ELLIOTT O'DONNELL. Duffield. 1929. $2.50.

Looking beyond the cinematish name of this book to the thickly double-lettered name of the author, one realizes that the emphasis will be on the "fatal" rather than on the "kisses," for Elliott O'Donnell is the writer of "Strange Disappearances," "Strange Sea Mysteries," and the like, and thinks no more of a dish of poison than ordinary folk do of a dish of tea. These kisses will not be fatal through any length of fervor of their own, but because Mr. O'Donnell has caught human nature up to its old tricks of wanting new husbands or wives for old, or the fortune of some stupid person too mean to die a natural death.

The book contains fourteen miniature crime stories based on fact, or near fact. It would make a good source book of skeleton plots for mystery stories. Several of the sketches have been written up before, but usually in much longer form. Mr. O'Donnell has an extremely simple way of presenting his material, introducing the most naïve asides on feminism, morals, female wiles, and kindred topics, which rather disarms criticism in the reader. While pundits debate the question as to whether or not Elizabeth was the Virgin Queen, this author calmly strips the good lady of the last shreds of respectable doubt. He forestalls serious attacks on his authenticity, consciously, by giving his source as tradition and, unconsciously, by admitting that the gentlemanly recipient of the queenly favors was a forebear of his own.

These death-dealing kisses are administered in many countries and in various periods of history. The story of the beautiful and wicked Marie Tarnowska (for whom the author has no kind word) weaves itself through the later days of aristocratic Russia. The Marquise de Brinvilliers killed the men she kissed in seventeenth-century France. It was in England, mid-eighteenth century, that pretty Mary Blandy put her little lace handkerchief over her face as the signal for her execution. And so it goes. Lovely ladies everywhere, kissing, killing, and dying.

THE TRIAL OF JOHN DONALD MERRETT (Notable British Trials). Edited by WILLIAM ROUGHEAD. Edinburgh: William Hodge & Co. 1929.

This trial does not make as good reading as some others in this fine series, but it has its points. For one thing, it is edited by William Roughead, the nonpareil amongst crime writers. His introduction is a model of what that sort of thing ought to be; clear, concise, disinterested, and with an entire absence of writing for effect.

Young Merrett, *aet.* 17 and precocious, was tried simultaneously for the murder of his mother and for forging her name—or, to be exact, "uttering" checks in her name. Surely such a trial could not have taken place outside of Scotland. The complexity of the legal issues is dizzying. As to the murder, a verdict of "non proven" was rendered, but the lad was found guilty of "uttering" and sentenced to a year in jail. The editor considers that he was lucky, and so did one reader.

In the retrospect the authorities appear to have been unconsciously slow in making up their minds that a murder may have been committed, for nearly a year was allowed to elapse between the tragedy and the trial. It is this which makes for a slackening of interest in the account. The memories of witnesses had become so hazy it was a foregone conclusion that the lad could not be convicted. There can hardly be any doubt as to what happened, but, well, the accused was lucky. It is the sordid tale of a too-mature boy who was unable to keep a motorcycle and a dance-hall hostess on an allowance of ten shillings a week. It renders the reader uneasy as showing how murder might be committed with impunity, given a little luck. A touch of real horror is lent to the volume by the inclusion of two photographs; one showing the boy at ten, a perfectly delightful child; the other as he appeared at the time of the trial, a sullen, brutalized young bravo. It would make a parent tremble.

SEA-LORE. By *Stanley Rogers*. Crowell. $2.75.
FRENCH HOMONYMS AND SYNONYMS. By *M. H. Larmoyre*. Pitman. $1.50.
WINNING AND WORKING. By *J. C. F. Statham*. Pitman. $6.
HOW TO SPEAK IN PUBLIC. By *C. F. Carr* and *F. E. Stevens*. Pitman. $1.
MASTER OF MY FATE. By *Herschel T. Manuel*. Century. $3.
THE NEW ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MUSIC AND MUSICIANS. Edited by *Waldo Selden Pratt*. Macmillan. $3.
EXPERIMENTS WITH HANDWRITING. By *Robert Saudek*. Morrow. $5.
HEALTHFUL LIVING. By *S. E. Bilik*. Scribners. $2.50.
WHAT IS RIGHT WITH MARRIAGE. By *Robert C. Binkley* and *Frances Williams Binkley*. Appleton. $2.50.
THE MAN A WOMAN MARRIES. By *Victor Cox Pedersen, M.D.* Minton, Balch.
THE CONCERT-GOER'S LIBRARY OF DESCRIPTIVE NOTES. By *Rosa Newmarch*. Vol. II. Oxford University Press.
THE PHYSIOLOGICAL MECHANICS OF PIANO TECHNIQUE. By *Otto Ortmann*. Dutton. $6.50.
TRACK ATHLETICS—UP TO DATE. By *Ellery H. Clark*. Duffield. $2.

(*Continued on page 174*)

# The Wits' Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

*Competition No. 68.* A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best Tennysonian lines—"Locksley Hall, 1929." (Entries should not exceed thirty lines of the appropriate verse and must reach the *Saturday Review* office, 25 West 45th Street, New York City, not later than the morning of October 7.)

*Competition No. 69.* A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best short rhymed poem called "The Firstborn." (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of October 14.)

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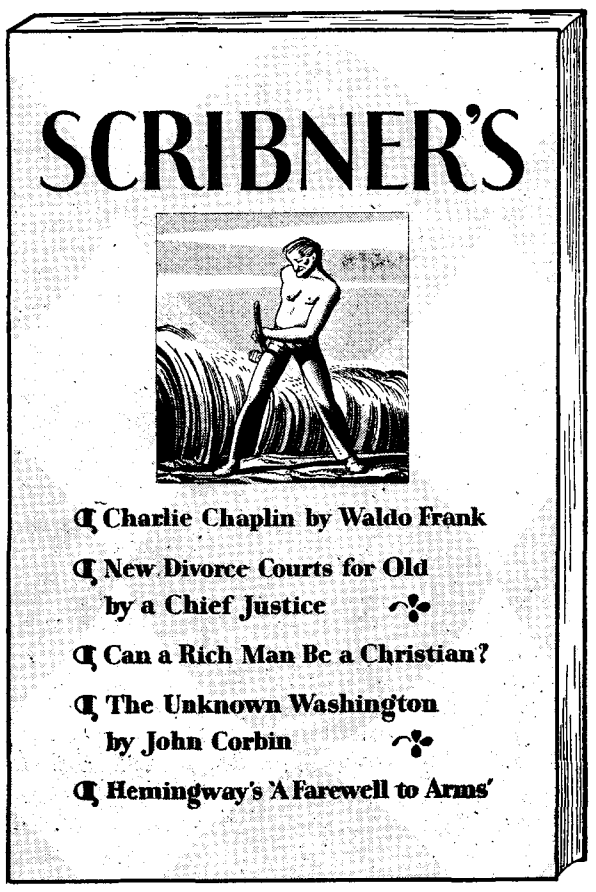
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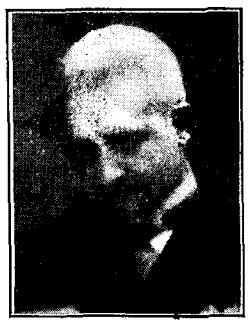

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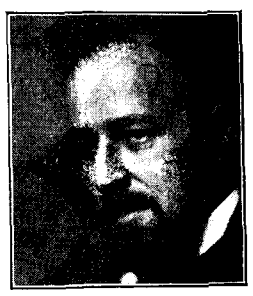

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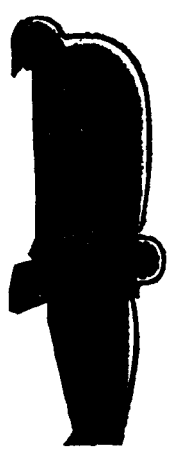

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# The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review.*

*E. D. E., Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, asks for a good, readable history of Ireland, not too long, but "the kind one who finds he knows little of real, definite Irish history would enjoy reading." W. B., New York, asks much the same question.*

IN such cases I am accustomed to recommend "The Story of the Irish Nation," by Francis Hackett (Century). It runs from pagan days to 1921; there is a strong current of feeling on which the reader is carried along as well as with that of history, but it does not get out of control; Mr. Hackett has a historian's sense of responsibility to the truth. A larger work is the "History of Ireland," by Stephen Gwynn (Macmillan), which goes from legendary days to the establishment of the Irish Free State. Mr. Gwynn added the volume "Ireland" to the series of studies of nations at the present day, published by Scribner under the collective title, "The Modern World: a Survey of Historical Forces." Ten nations are already represented.

*H. A. S., New York City, asks for books of "beginner's French" to help a mother (with the usual finishing-school equipment) in the teaching of her seven-year-old child.*

I HAVE received such good reports from the use of the text-books of Walter Ripman that I suggest his "First Steps in French" (Dutton), in the illustrated edition, and his "French Picture Vocabulary" (Dutton), in two volumes, sixty cents each, and his "Hints on Teaching French" (Dutton). There is also "Children's French," by Soltoft and Ballard (World Book Co.); "Children's French Conversation in Forty Graded Lessons," by J. Helein (Brentano); "Pour Apprendre à Parler," by F. J. Kueny (Allyn), and a number of other introductions, whose vocabularies are within a little child's range of interest. For reading aloud there is endless material; I suggest "French Songs and Verse for Children" in a little book by H. Terry (Longmans, Green), and as much of Perrault and Mme. de Ségur as may be obtained. It may reinforce the mother's French to learn that two of the best stories of Mme. de Ségur are also obtainable in excellent English versions: "Memoirs of a Donkey" is in Macmillan's "Little Library," and Knopf has just brought out a charmingly illustrated version of "Les Malheurs de Sophie" under the title, "Sophie, the Story of a Bad Little Girl." The lapses from grace of this young person, however, are only such as ever more endear; Sophie should be in every child's circle of book-friends.

*J. C. S. Ferndale, California, asks for books for documenting a course on contemporary periodicals.*

IF there were more books like Oswald Garrison Villard's "Some Newspapers and Newspapermen" (Knopf, new edition), it would be easier to fill a bookshelf with material supplementary to study of a selected list of American and English newspapers and magazines, such as this course has in mind. "Some Magazines and Magazine Makers," by J. E. Drewry (Stratford, 1924), has some material not elsewhere to be found; the New York *Times* tells its own story in "The Making of a Newspaper" (*Times*); "The American Magazine of Today" is the subject of a pamphlet by A. D. Keator, published by the University of North Dakota, and several of the admirable publications of the School of Journalism of the University of Missouri would be valuable here; indeed, if I were planning such a course I would communicate with Dean Walter Williams's bright young men at the University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo., and with Cornell University, as well as with the Pulitzer School of Journalism, Columbia University. Though this collection is needed less for historical background than for present-day survey, there are several useful books along this line besides the "History of Journalism in the United States," by G. H. Payne (Appleton), and W. G. Bleyer's "Main Currents in the History of American Journalism" (Houghton Mifflin). The "History of Kansas Newspapers" is published by the Kansas State Historical Society; the "History of the Arkansas Press," by F. W. Allsopp, by Alsopp & Chapple; "The Newspaper and Authority," by Lucy M. Salmon (Oxford), a study of censorship, and the same author's "The Newspaper and the Historian" (Oxford),—each of these is of the highest value for reference use,—and among the histories of certain newspapers, "The Story of an Independent Newspaper," by Richard Hooker (Macmillan), a century of the *Springfield Republican.* "The Country Newspaper," by M. V. Atwood (McClurg); "The Conscience of the Newspaper," by L. N. Flint (Appleton); "Ethics of Journalism," by N. A. Crawford (Knopf), are all American; for across the ocean we have the "History of English Journalism to the Foundation of the *Gazette*" by J. B. Williams (Longmans, Green), and "*The Manchester Guardian:* a Century of History," by J. S. Mills (Holt), the last-named an important addition to this collection.

If I were choosing representative English periodicals for study, I would begin with *The Times,* making a separate and grateful obeisance to its *Literary Supplement*; the *Manchester Guardian,* the *Edinburgh Scotsman*—that's a grand newspaper, but I wish the type were larger, you get too much for the money—the *Daily Mail* and the *Evening Standard.* Of the weeklies the *New Statesman* would get me further on than any of the others, though I would need the *Irish Statesman,* and of course there would have to be *Punch.* I wish someone would make a special study of the juvenile press in London, the colored sheets that for a penny fill the needs we supply with the adult comic-strip, but fill them with distinctly juvenile situations and interests. Such a study would take in the adventures of Pip, Squeak, and Wilfred in the *Daily Mirror*—a complicate and wonderful continued story of dogs, of rabbits, and especially of penguins, chock-full of individuality and followed with breathless attention by countless child-readers. Indeed, I commend to this college class a study of the provision made for childhood in the contemporary newspaper, in America and abroad.

*C. M., Paris, France, needs travel-book material for the Basses Pyrenées, having only as yet the romantic stories of Eleanor Mercein, "Basquerie," and "The Romance of the Basque Country and the Pyrenees," by Jensen, with Baedeker and the Blue Guide.*

"THE Basque Country," by K. W. D. Fedden (Houghton Mifflin), is a large, illustrated work dealing with this region. Other than that there seems to be in print in English only the new volume of Eleanor Mercein's Basque stories, "The Book of Bette" (Harper), and various works on the Baskish language, which I cannot believe this traveller intends to tackle, the virtue of the race being popularly assigned to the fact that the Devil lived there seven years trying to pick up enough of the language with which to mislead them, and then gave it up as a bad job. One of the books published by the Oxford University Press on this subject refers to "the 338 forms of the verb." For the Pyrenees in general we have "Hilltowns of the Pyrenees," by the Oakleys (Century); "Things Seen in the Pyrenees," by L. Richardson (Dutton); "Along the Pyrenees," by Paul Wilstach (Bobbs-Merrill), and the enthralling account of searching for prehistoric remains in the caves of this region, Sawtell and Treat's "Primitive Hearths in the Pyrenees" (Appleton), a prize travel-book.

*H. W. B., Fort Collins, Colorado, asks how many volumes of Marcel Proust have been put into English, and by whom published.*

"SWANN'S WAY," in two volumes, was published by Holt ($5); then Seltzer took over what was evidently becoming a somewhat delicate task; at the dissolution of this firm the second instalment of two volumes, "Within a Budding Grove," was, and is now, published by Boni ($6); so is the next set of two, "The Guermentes Way" ($6), and the next, "Cities of the Plain" ($15), as well as the just published "The Captive" ($3). The translation is by C. K. Scott-Moncrieff, which is the same as saying that it could not be better done. The beginner who wishes to sample the style of Proust in the original may easily do so with a volume of "Selections," published by the Oxford University Press for fifty cents; this little book contains five representative narratives.

We have not as yet such a crowd of commentaries on Proust as already exists in French, but there is L. Pierre-Quint's "Marcel Proust" (Knopf) and a brief but stimulating study, "Proust," by Clive Bell (Harcourt, Brace), which makes an excellent spring-board for a jump into these pages.

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# THIRTY OR UNDER

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* * *

We solicit a frank and provocative expression of honest opinion, critical, but not carping or merely negative in spirit, worthy in form, in insight, and in content of thinking of a generation already half way into the saddle.

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The Saturday Review of Literature reserves the right to print in its columns the essay chosen, and also to take and print at its usual rates any other article submitted in the competition. In either case, first American serial rights only will be retained by The Saturday Review. Manuscripts must reach the Editor not later than noon on Friday, November 15, 1929.

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## Prelude to Business

ATTACKING the accumulated books of summer, after a vacation which, unlike the traditional sailor's holiday, has been spent away from the inky sophistication of books and the bookish, one wonders what will be the coming season's harvest. The tempo of American life in every other way is so fast, that it is surprising that the printing of books has so long kept to traditional ways. Even the advertising of the latest gadgets in motor cars and radio, in talkies and cosmetics and cigarettes, has only very recently shown any real imagination or originality, and when these desiderata have been present they often suggest uncouthness rather than an improvement in vigor and taste.

In printing, as the advertisements might say, "it is taste" which counts. I confess that an elaborate dinner menu baffles me: I have no ability to pick out from the maze of dishes offered the proper combination which will make a dinner and not a "meal." I am not like the Yale freshman who heard with open-mouthed astonishment from his French teacher that there is such a thing as a fine art of eating; for even if I were otherwise ignorant, I could deduce such a theory from the indubitable fact that there is a fine art of printing!

What interests me is just how this fine art of printing is going to be practiced this winter and next year. Just as the menu of the lover of fine food offers few opportunities for additions (though they may be changed in minute but innumerable ways by the wizardry of the chef and his sauces) so the typographical repository offers few chances for novelty in the introduction or discovery of new type forms. Dissected, the so-called new forms will be found to be repetitions of old *motifs*, resurrections of long forgotten letters, or rearrangements of old patterns. It would be possible, I suppose, to enlarge the bounds of our tyye chart for many generations if we could bring in the alphabetical forms of other languages—even as the chess board is promised a new lease of life by the addition of more squares. If we could adopt the discarded Turkish characters, for instance, the resulting possibilities in combinations and in designs might set us forth on new paths for many years. The Arabic characters are the most graceful of any alphabet, as the lingering numerals in our alphabet attest, when seen in their best estate. The infusion of a little Arab blood might rejuvenate the Roman alphabet! For the Roman alphabet, practical and legible as it is, is not very beautiful and is even frequently ugly.

⁂ ⁂

It is scarcely likely that we shall try any more cross-breeding however. The coming of the printing press put a stop to that. Perhaps in no field of creative work has greater ingenuity been shown than in the multitudinous forms of our types, which, maintaining a more or less close fidelity to their originals of the past, have struck out at every angle and in every curve known to geometer or artist. But the end is in sight, if not here. The arrangement of the types, on the other hand, is still open to perhaps infinite variety, inasmuch as each new piece of "copy" is a new problem presented.

There is nothing new about this problem of arrangement in the larger sense; we have still the old type forms: does the designer of books have, then, no opportunities and no responsibilities? He has. The immediate job is to get rid for all time of the badly designed letter forms which have clogged the printing-offices for too long. He can refuse to make any use whatever of those ill-made types which can be replaced by better. A thorough typographic house-cleaning is in order. We have no situation here like that in France, where the persistence of that wretched, spiky survival of Didot's abominable letters still dominates French printing: although the continued use of a poor "old style," like the so-called linotype old-style number one, is not very different. Why should either face be preserved a minute longer? Why not scrap them immediately? Why should even the most ephemeral of modern novels be printed in poor type, since it does not cost one cent more to use a better face?

The trouble seems to be that of ignorance or lack of imagination—if they be not the same thing. These debased types are not good, however legible they may be, any more than half-tone pictures are works of art, however faithful, or a mawkish combination of glue and gun-cotton is leather, however much it superficially resembles leather. Our books are printed in undistinguished type because the people who design them are misled by the facility of the machine and, more, because of sheer ignorance as to what is good. The ignorance of printers and publishers alike in the matter of type is prodigious. The idea of letting a busy, unenlightened superintendent of a printing-office set the style for books is absurd, yet it is what happens with a surprising number of books, even books of some importance. I found one book printer once who thought his Franklin Old Style type was Caslon because the second hand dealer from whom he bought it told him it was Caslon! In that case the type was specifically named as Caslon in the colophon. (It is a silly custom to name the type face in the colophon, anyway.) Such ignorance of the details of one's craft lies at the bottom of much of the bad work we see. Such lack, which is also in a way one of taste, is to be seen everywhere, unfortunately, in all countries which have got into the machine stage of "civilization," or which have been corrupted by it.

It may be that I am a reformer at heart, rather than "a calm observer of ought and must." I never see a book printed in poor type with ill-conceived margins, and lackluster designs, that I do not feel the desire to kill—or rather to estop that printer from


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committing any more typographic solecisms. The reader is helpless: for as often as not the book is a desirable addition to the store of learning, and there it is, a *fait accompli*. If it is an impossible task to prevent the commission of these typographic crimes, it is a prodigious one to train the printer and the book designer to such a state of perfection that he will *not* use ill-begotten types. But it is necessary to affect such training, and insofar as I can I shall harp on those deficiencies which are to be avoided and recommend those excellencies which I deem of importance in the quest of the book beautiful—if there is any such thing.

What constitutes a finely printed book it is difficult to suggest in theory, since to length, breadth and thickness must be added a feeling for the book as a whole (both simply and in its relation to the contents) which it is impossible to define—or if possible, then only by the tedious and desiccated formulæ of the student of Italian painting! It is the purpose of this column to attempt an artistic appraisal of the current craft of book printing. May the coming season bring forth works of more intelligence and better taste, and if someone can evolve a book truly in the modern style it will be no less welcome than those perfect flowers of old gardens which once in a while gladden our sight. R.

## Two Books of Verse

THE HOMING. By CAROLINE HAZARD. New York. The Harbor Press. 1929.

THE WALL OF WEEPING. By SIMON FLEG. Translated by HUMBERT WOLFE. London: Gollancz. 1929.

THAT poetry can be well printed, these books attest. Miss Hazard's book is set in Caslon, and though printed from slugs, the delicacy of impression could scarcely be better. Unfortunately the grain of the paper runs the wrong way for pleasantest handling—which small criticism is the only issue we would take with the printing of this book.

M. Fleg's poem, which appears at a peculiarly appropriate moment, has been printed in Baskerville type—which, with Caslon, is perhaps the best selection for verse—and since the decorative features are reduced to nothing, what more is there to say of it typographically? Seven hundred and fifty copies have been printed and signed by the author and translator. R.

### SADISM

IT is still true (in spite of the persistent efforts of the advertising crowd to reverse the process) that demand creates supply: the great ebullition of "curiosa" since the war (reprints, alas, of a freer age!) as well as the welcome frankness of modern writing, are not a cause but an effect. Here, now (in answer to what clarion call?) comes "De Sade: being a series of wounds, inflicted with brush and pen, upon Sadistic Wolves garbed in Masochist's Wool," by Beresford Egan and Brian de Shane, and published by the Fortune Press in London. Mr. de Shane's wounds are not so bad; one can read and find cause for the wounding, if any. He is a bit hysterical, a bit elusive for one who would wound deeply, but at least he has something to say. So much can hardly be said for the performances with a brush by Mr. Egan. Here the adolescent quality lurking in the text becomes juvenile. I do not believe myself a saddist, but I have seldom been sadder than when I tried to make either sense or beauty from the pictures in this book. The essay should have been printed alone, for its own sake. R.

An agreement entering into operation in the near future between Denmark's library union and the Danish bookdealers' union contains a significant paragraph according to which libraries are to agree to let four months pass after the date books are published before lending them to library subscribers. The agreement, which is greatly to the advantage of Danish authors, is satisfactory to both publishers and authors.


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LAST week we were forced to stop suddenly in our discussion of the poetry of *Herbert Trench* because of the limitations of the space at our disposal. Today we proceed from where we left off. We were saying that the theme of Trench's poem "Apollo and the Seaman" was the passing of the age of faith, symbolized by the foundering of a great ship, "even the little fluttering genius reft from the wrecked and flameless shrine." Well, Apollo finally attempts to give hope to the rebelling Seaman who revolts against the annihilation of self,—faith in the future of the race and a belief in a deeper communal mystery. At length he succeeds. At first he challenges,

*And, born aboard, my rover stark,*
*Dread you to die aboard?*
*To lay you down beside your love*
*With the sunset on your sword?*

referring to life on earth; but his final pronouncement is that

*When once the whole consummate strength*
*Of thy slow-kindling mind*
*Can see in the* heart's *light at length*
*All the strange sons of mankind,*
*Then the Earth—that else were but a strait*
*Rock-sepulchre—is new:*
*Of what account to it is death?*
*It is glowing, through and through,*
*It moveth, alive with a God's breath,*
*Translucent as the dew!*

Of natural beauty on earth Trench is always keenly aware. He has heard "rocky pastures" speak in "herds of bells." He has seen "the waterfalls like smoke blown from the fells." And here is a glimpse he caught "through a half-open door . . . in a rude inn," in France, at the vintage season:

*A woman's arm—bare, simple, pure,*
*Holding a light*
*Shielded (herself the while obscure)*
*In exquisite*
*Fingers translucent as a grape*
*Bird-wings or wine*
*Enshading in soft blood-hued shape*
*The candle-shine.*

Also the figure on Nelson's Column can inspire this resonant stanza, among others:

*At the post he will not quit,*
*Round him the sunset runs*
*Sulphurous, like smoke of guns;*
*As he stood when he was hit*
*He stands, with empty sleeve upknit*
*And eye like a blinded rifle-pit*
*Still on the harbours opposite,*
*The cold star on his bosom lit*
*By the light of foundered suns.*

There is an earlier book of Trench's, "Deirdre Wed," that we also possess. Leaving his longer poems, if you will read such shorter ones as "A Charge," "Come, let us make Love Deathless," "She comes not when Noon is on the Roses," "You were stay'd," from the former volume, and "O Dreamy, Gloomy, Friendly Trees," "Old Anchor Chanty," "The Questioners," "I Heard a Soldier," "Jean Richepin's Song," and "The Reparation," from the later one which we have discussed, you will be richly repaid by a familiarity with unusually beautiful lyrics. Here are a true command of vivid and musical phrase, a noble accent, warm sympathy with the travail of humanity, and a sensitive muscularity of emotion. And today Herbert Trench is but one of the many fine comparatively recent poets on the almost endless shelves. . . .

He is also only one of many remarkable Irish poets. In fact a large amount of the most stirring English verse, as we refer to it in a large way, has been written by the Irish. . . .

We have been reading proof on an anthology, the compilation of the American section of which has been largely our doing, save for consultation with our more eminent collaborator. Which reminds us of how much poetry we have read in the last twenty-five years or so, how large a part of our reading has been poetry. We are probably crazy as it is, but it is a wonder we are not crazier! . . .

Yet specializing, so to speak, in poetry, both in the absorbed reading of it and in sporadic attempts to produce some of our own, has proved probably the greatest solace and stay our life has afforded. And, peculiar as it may seem, we remain of the same opinion still, that poetry is the finest flower of the art of writing. Perhaps properly it is ordinarily, therefore, the least remunerative,—though in our time we have seen at least three excellent volumes of poetry make money for their authors,—all the more pleasing a phenomenon in that, in each case, the writer possessed no motive save to give the best of which he was capable, create a vision that possessed him utterly. For poetry of any account can be written in no other way. Its demands are stringent. . . .

But whether or not the poet starve, the practice of poetry quickens every fiber of the spirit. The loins must be girded up. And even a phrase or line of one's own may, it follows, be a constantly renewed delight to the memory. No more so—in fact far, far often less so—then the remembrance of phrases or lines from others; but how many of these there are, and how even familiar poems are constantly rendering up new significances as one comes back to them again and again! . . .

The frontiers of the domain of poetry have been pushed far in this day and generation. There is relish for almost every taste, there is sustenance for almost every type of mind. There are long stories in modern verse of as large a scope as the novels. And, indeed, that has always been so. Half of the best narratives in English literature, at least, have been written by the poets.

It is our own experience that the reading of poetry does not pall on one as one grows older nearly so much as does the reading of prose. Of course the poem has the advantage of far greater compactness. Many lyrics can be taken in almost at the glance of an eye, though, granted a good memory, they may be pondered upon for days thereafter. But the best lyrics, compact as they are, say as cogent things concerning the most vital aspects of life as many chapters of many novels. Perhaps age grows lazier in regard to reading many words. (Heaven knows our age seems even lazier than our youth, and that in all conscience was lazy enough!) But the reading of most novels is often to read the same story over and over, though in one it may be baldly or grossly put, in another delicately or enchantingly; one writer's particular style may always please, another's always jar. . . .

Yet poetry gives the pith. One flashing ironic line satisfies a mood more than all the interminable presentation of the thoughts and actions of imaginary people. No, in truth, it is *not* the lazier mind that turns to poetry, for in that it is more compact, more elliptical, more eliding, a quicker sensitivity, a keener detection of truly significant experience must be brought to bear upon it. The poet shoots the Parthian arrow in passing, and is over the horizon while it is winging. Such feats, to a maturity more or less fertile in experience, furnish an especial joy. And poetry stirs up the stream of consciousness by image and allusion so that all sorts of strange realizations float to the surface. Cognate apprehensions arise that even the poet himself could not foretell. The ripples widen and widen toward the shore, once the bright missile has found its target, shattering the reflective mirror of the mind. . . .

And again we find ourselves cut off in phrasemaking's very mid-career! Behold! Once more before us the great and frowning god, Terminus. Well, more next week, and it will be upon quite other matters. Meanwhile, we thank you for your patience.

THE PHOENICIAN.

# The New Books

## Religion

(*Continued from page* 168)

THE TERCENTENARY YEAR OF THE REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA. Edited by EDGAR FRANKLIN ROMIG. Published by the Church, 1928. $3.

This volume, which contains all the addresses, poems, sermons, and a full description of the events, incident to the three hundredth anniversary of the American beginning of the Dutch Church in this country, is of primary value to the members of that Communion; but there are things in it of general interest both to those interested in religion and to those who are desirous of informative material about early New York history.

The significance of the celebration did not, apparently, lie in the numerical importance of the Dutch Reformed Church, of which there are only about 150,000 members in America. The communion made the mistake of stressing its Dutchness for too many decades, which prevented much appeal to the inflowing population of this country. Similar errors were made by the Anglicans and by the Lutherans, but the Dutch Church was more tenacious than either of home ties and of the mother tongue. Nor was the significance due particularly to what happened in 1628. That year the first Dutch pastor arrived in New Amsterdam, one John Michaelius; but he does not seem much to have mattered. Indeed he made so little an impression that he seems to have sunk into oblivion from which he was rescued only by a chance discovery, centuries later, of letters of his in some Dutch archives.

What have mattered through the centuries have been the high quality of the communion and the contributions it has made to broad-mindedness and to honest and devotional religion. This is stressed, as it ought to be stressed, in most of those addresses.

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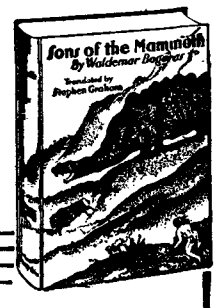


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# Points of View

## Be of Good Cheer

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

You may be surprised to know that the *Saturday Review of Literature* comes to far off Albania, but assuming that fact I am sure you will believe that its readers have a real liking for the beer and excellent cigarettes. There is no doubt that Albanians love beer and drink all that they can afford. Recently I observed that the stock of drinks in a coffee house was very low and asking why was told that the evening before a party of twelve men drank ninety bottles. *Can Hoboken equal that?* We get the real beer that made Munich famous, two-third of a litre to the bottle and costing three kronen ($.24) so we all look forward to getting beer from Scutari or "Shkodra" at a lower price.

It is true that most of the people are Moslems to whom alcohol is forbidden, but so are the Americans, and you know how it is.

Still I give the Albanians credit for real temperance. They generally drink a small amount in a long time, but, man, how they enjoy it! Besides beer there are several native drinks, good ones and priced for poor men. There is Greek cognac at seven kronen a bottle or a lek (four cents) a drink, mastika (anisette) that turns milky when water is added; permett, a double distilled golden green brandy that carries conviction to the heart of the hardest-headed drinker. Then there is "roush," a water-clear raw spirit distilled direct from grapes. All of these sell at a lek or four cents a drink, and are sipped slowly at small tables. Of course there is wine, but it lacks age unless you buy imported Chianti and that costs seventy-five cents a litre or a krone for a big glass.

However, no account of the drinks can make you see the local color that goes along. The coffee houses with floors of tramped earth, the brightly costumed gypsy girls who serve, the strong-featured men in fez, skenderbeg jacket, colored brez or sash, and baggy trousers unchanged since Venice ruled the Adriatic. It is a piece of the Orient in Europe. Still things do change. My favorite "barkeep" is Jan Leka, whose glasses are clean and whose beer garden is shady and full of flowers. One day I saw him diligently copying from a book, which on investigation proved to be the "Rubaiyat" in Albanian. Then too there are my boys in the school, so keen-witted, eager to learn new ways, to get new crops from the old soil that for centuries has raised crops of heroes and patriots. I have taught in the United States for sixteen years, but after two years here I can say it is the best teaching I ever did. Keep your eye on Albania.

H. F. BUTTAN.

Kavato, Albania.

## George Sterling Again

To the Editor of the *Saturday Review*:
SIR:

Please permit me to point out a few errors in the letter of Mr. G. H. Cunningham, which appeared in the *Saturday Review* of July 20.

First: George Sterling's home town was Sag Harbor, New York, situated on Shelter Island Sound, one hundred miles east of New York City. Sag Harbor was once a whaling port, but it never was a fishing village—at least, not for the past hundred years. Sag Harbor is a manufacturing town; the famous Fahys watch cases are made there, as well as the Eaton engraving machines. Sag Harbor is also an excellent summer resort.

Second, Sterling, and at least *two* others flew the "Jolly Roger."

Third, They flew it from the Presbyterian church. The Episcopal church spire is not as high as the Presbyterian; it is the Presbyterian spire which has been marked on the charts for more than fifty years. The Episcopal church was the target of a still greater indignity, the details of which are unprintable.

Fourth, Sterling visited Sag Harbor several times after his trip West. Many of his poems, especially some of the "Sonnets to Craig," were written in Sag Harbor.

All this, and still more I learned from my mother, from my uncle, and from Harry D. Sleight, journalist and historian, who knew Sterling and went to school with him. Mr. Sleight tells me that Commodore Harold Cunningham of the *Leviathan* knew Sterling well.

JOHN CHARLES HUDEN.

Winsted, Conn.

## Accidental Hexameters

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

A recent letter of Mr. Steven T. Byington in your paper quotes a letter of March 2, by a Mr. Montague, with regard to accidental hexameters in the common translation of the English Bible. I have not noticed reference to a notable line which was long ago pointed out as a perfect and poetical hexameter.

*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!*
Isaiah 14; 12.

The line following with slight elision makes another hexameter.

*How 'rt thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*

Mr. Byington's list is admirable, and many more would be added, we may presume, were a complete search made. The fact remains that the rhythmical style of the King James version lends itself usually not to any fixed meter, but simply to a musical, rhythmical prose, far surpassing most of the "free verse" with which of late we have been tortured.

In the new volume of poems by Miss Emily Dickinson, many of the stanzas are printed, unfortunately, as if they were halting free verse, while usually they are simply the characteristic quatrains of which she was the unique master.

FRANCIS L. PALMER.

Seabury Divinity School.


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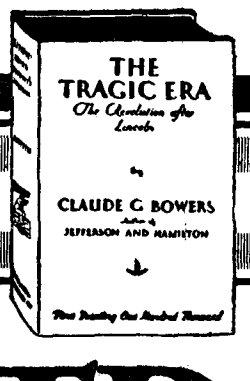


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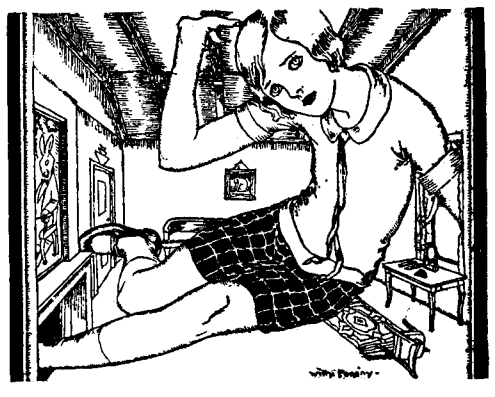

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